Countdown

Annual

UFO

Dr. Who

Thunderbirds

Captain Scarlet

5
4
3
2
1
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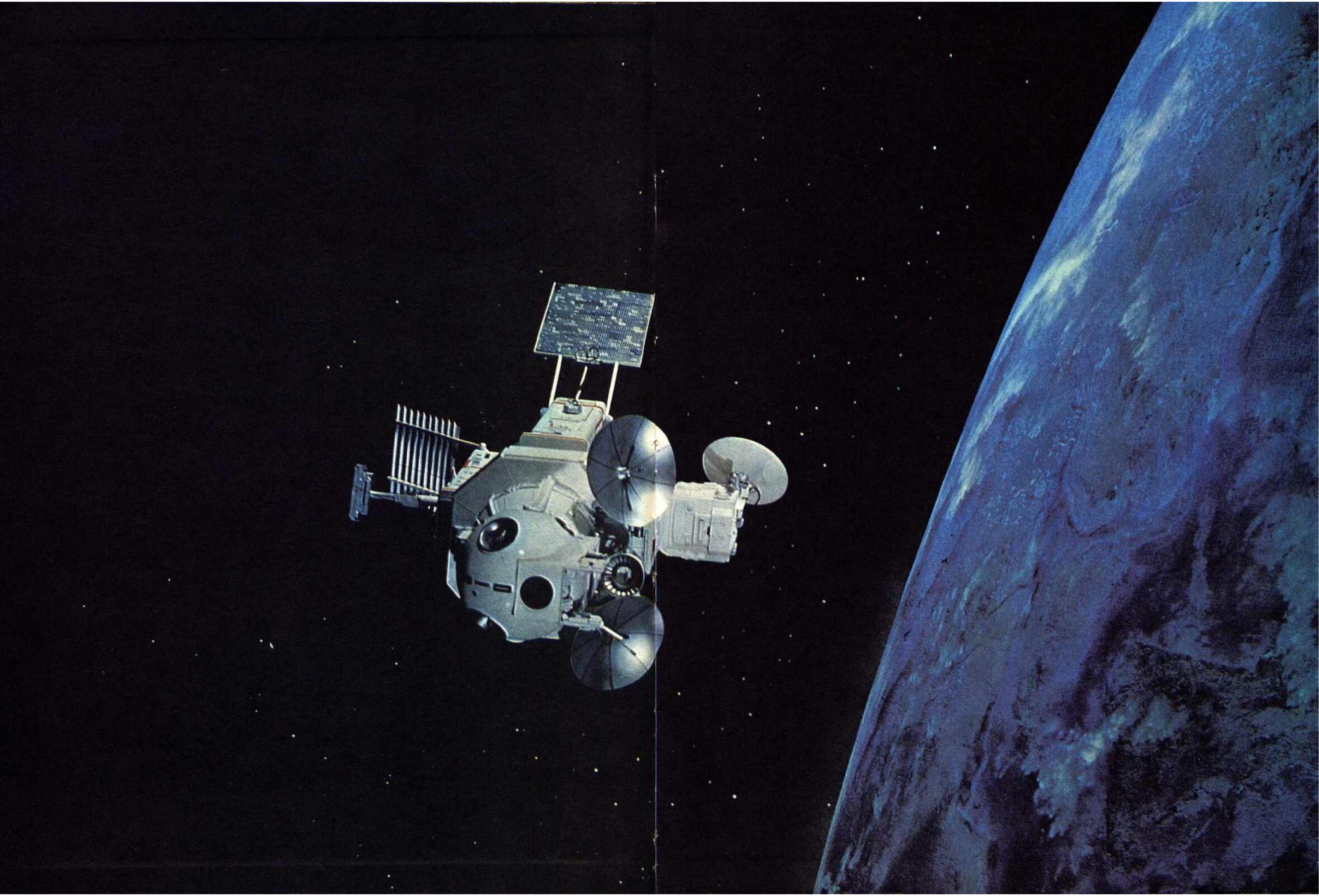
A POLYSTYLE PUBLICATION

COUNTDOWN ANNUAL 1972



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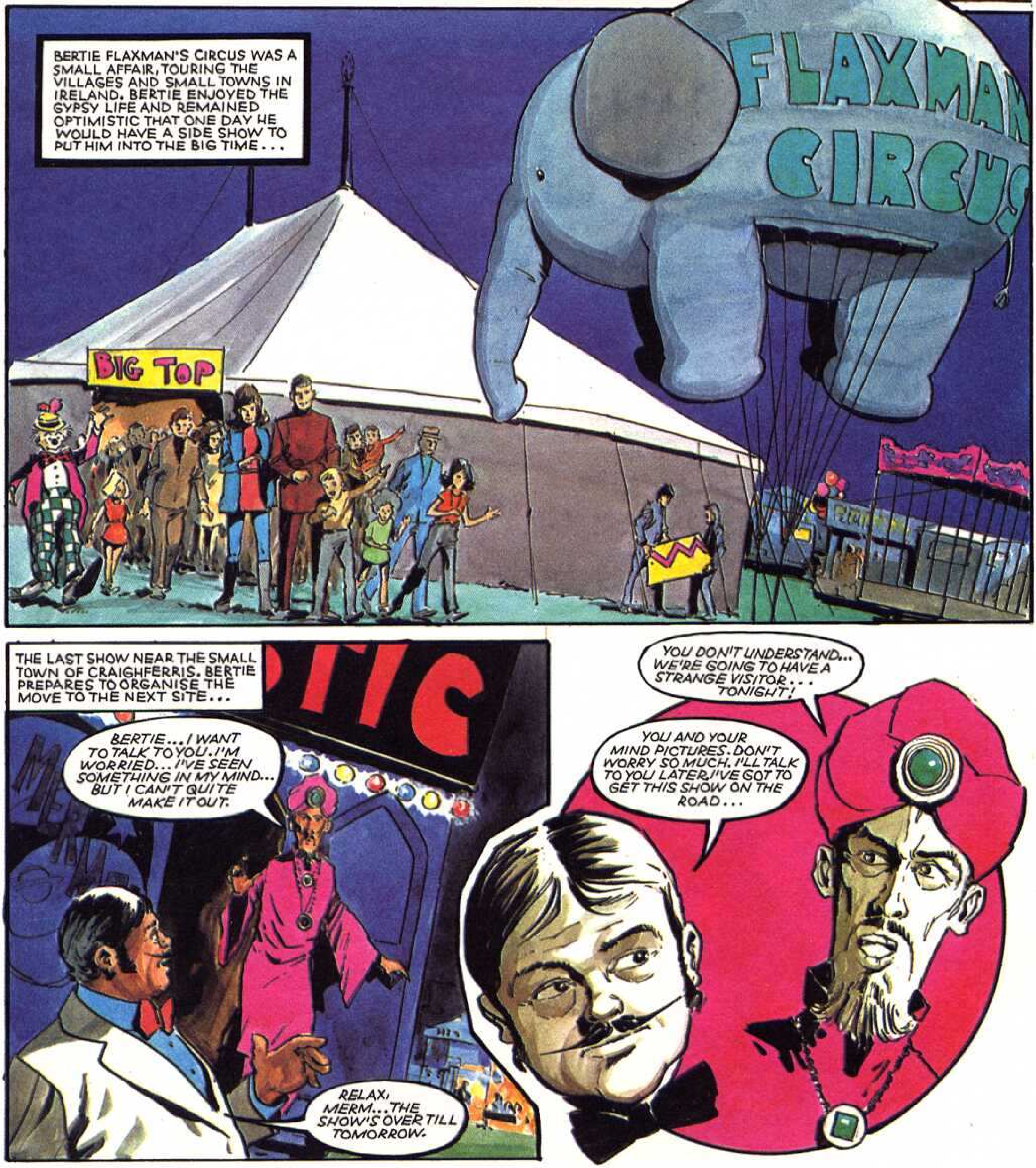
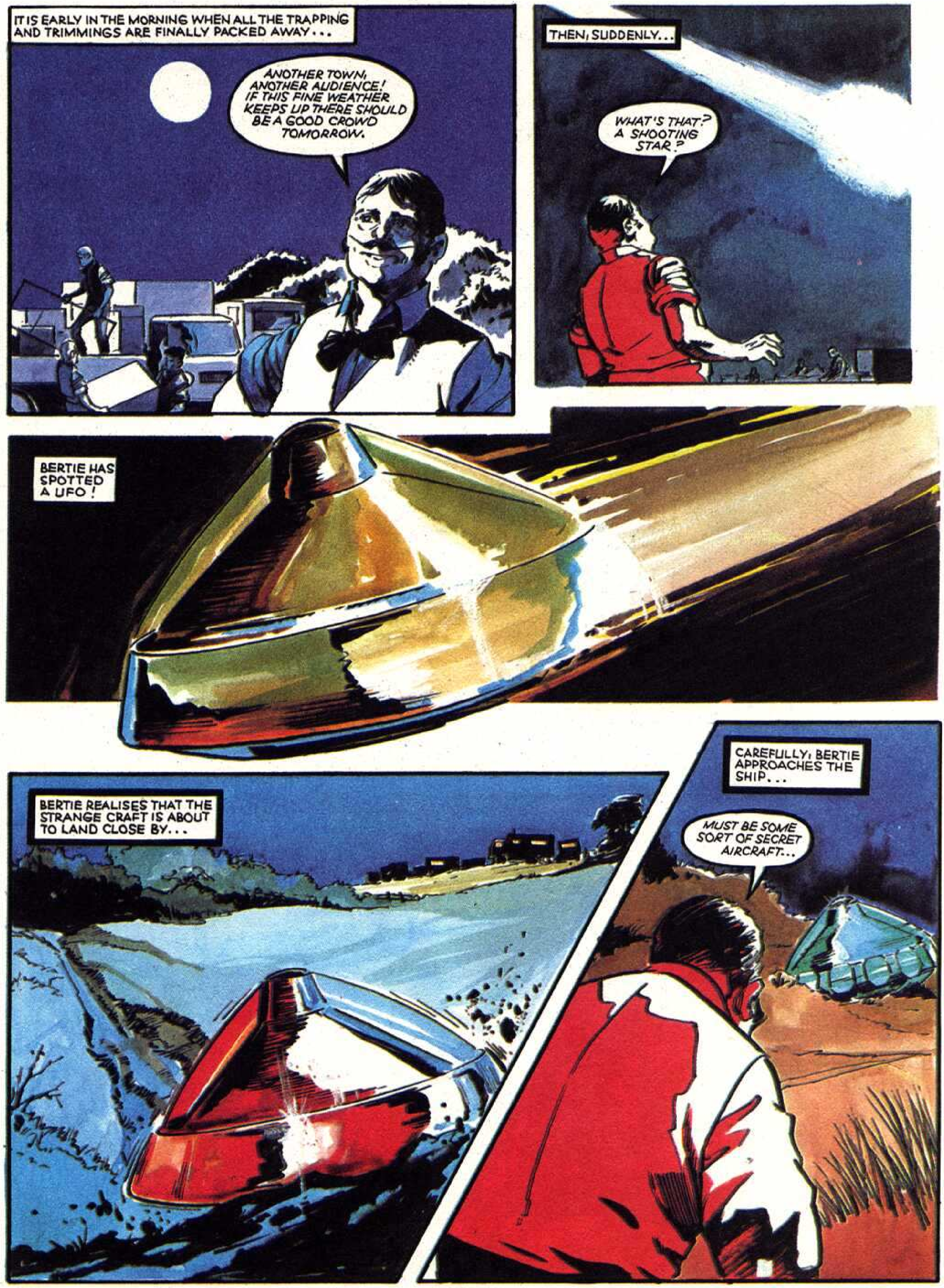
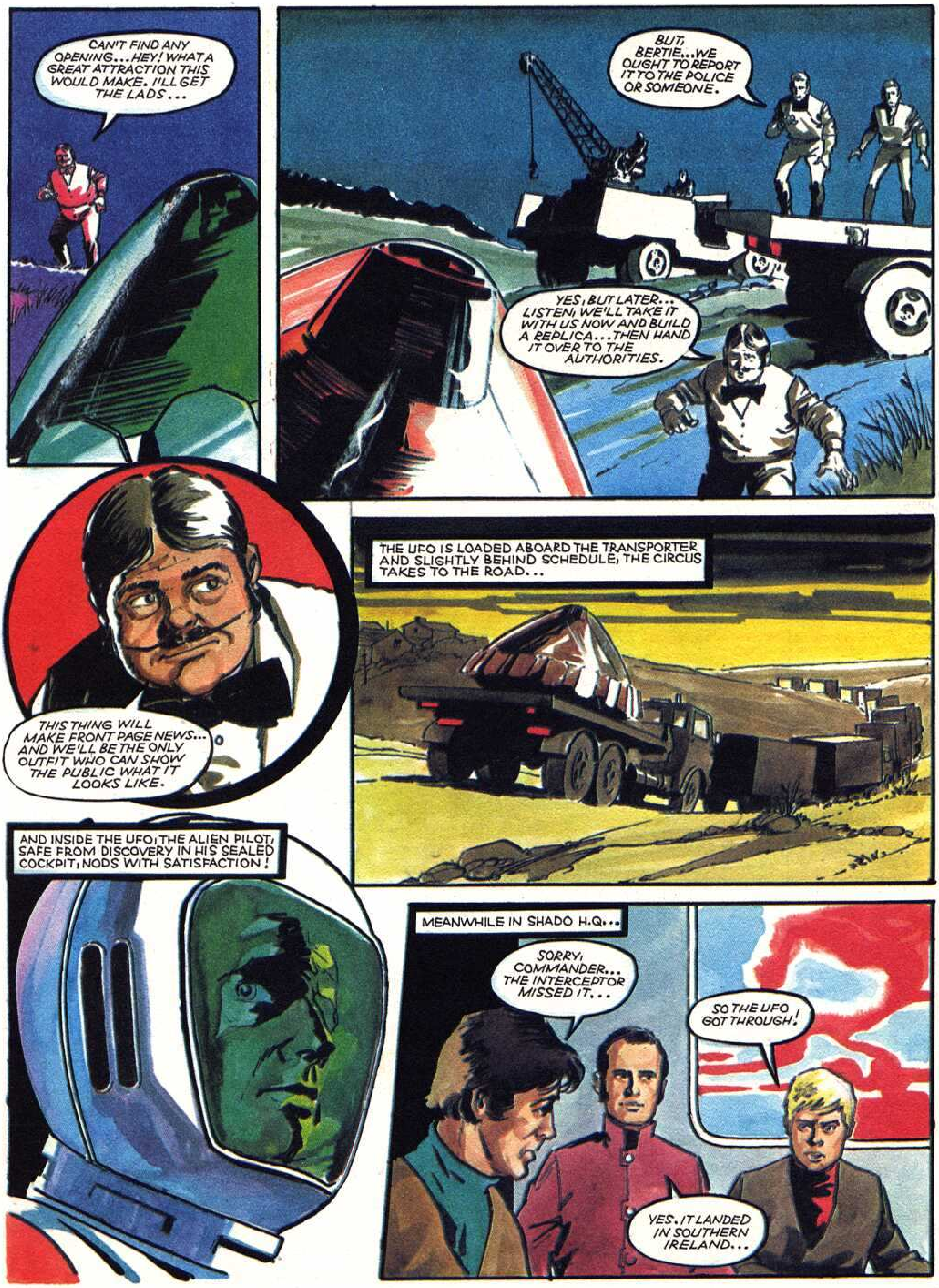
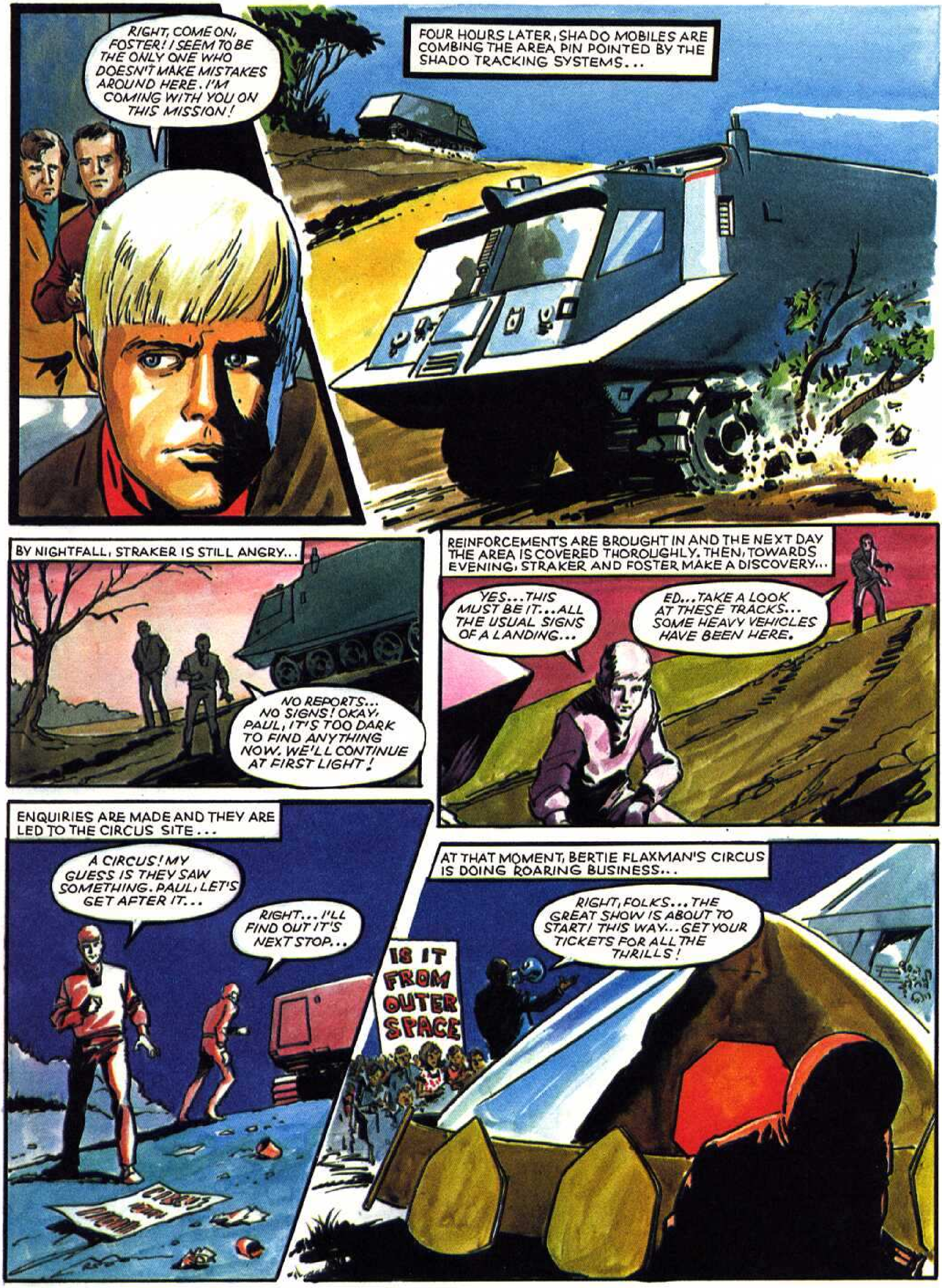
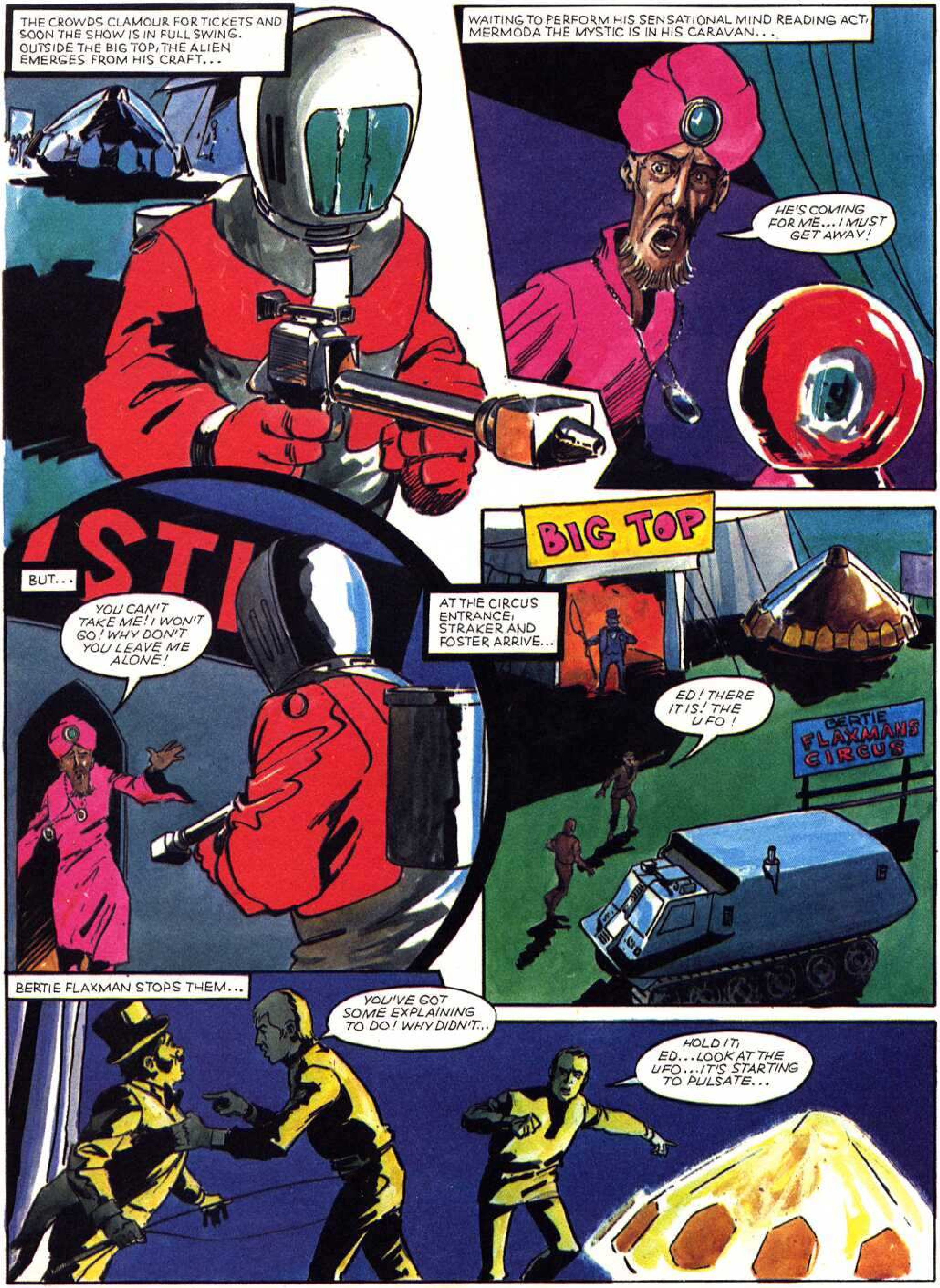
UFO
THE CIRCUS


BERTIE FLAXMAN'S CIRCUS WAS A SMALL AFFAIR, TOURING THE VILLAGES AND SMALL TOWNS IN IRELAND. BERTIE ENJOYED THE GYPSY LIFE AND REMAINED OPTIMISTIC THAT ONE DAY HE WOULD HAVE A SIDE SHOW TO PUT HIM INTO THE BIG TIME . . .
FLAXMAN CIRCUS
BIG TOP
THE LAST SHOW NEAR THE SMALL TOWN OF CRAIGHFERRIS. BERTIE PREPARES TO ORGANISE THE MOVE TO THE NEXT SITE . . .
BERTIE... I WANT TO TALK TO YOU. I'M WORRIED... I'VE SEEN SOMETHING IN MY MIND... BUT I CAN'T QUITE MAKE IT OUT.
RELAX, MERM... THE SHOW'S OVER TILL TOMORROW.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND... WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A STRANGE VISITOR . . . TONIGHT!
YOU AND YOUR MIND PICTURES. DON'T WORRY SO MUCH. I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER, I'VE GOT TO GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD . . .


IT IS EARLY IN THE MORNING WHEN ALL THE TRAPPING AND TRIMMINGS ARE FINALLY PACKED AWAY...
ANOTHER TOWN, ANOTHER AUDIENCE! IF THIS FINE WEATHER KEEPS UP THERE SHOULD BE A GOOD CROWD TOMORROW.
THEN, SUDDENLY...
WHAT'S THAT? A SHOOTING STAR?
BERTIE HAS SPOTTED A UFO!
BERTIE REALISES THAT THE STRANGE CRAFT IS ABOUT TO LAND CLOSE BY...
CAREFULLY, BERTIE APPROACHES THE SHIP...
MUST BE SOME SORT OF SECRET AIRCRAFT...


CAN'T FIND ANY OPENING...HEY! WHAT A GREAT ATTRACTION THIS WOULD MAKE. I'LL GET THE LADS...
BUT, BERTIE...WE OUGHT TO REPORT IT TO THE POLICE OR SOMEONE.
YES, BUT LATER... LISTEN, WE'LL TAKE IT WITH US NOW AND BUILD A REPLICA...THEN HAND IT OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES.
THIS THING WILL MAKE FRONT PAGE NEWS... AND WE'LL BE THE ONLY OUTFIT WHO CAN SHOW THE PUBLIC WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE.
THE UFO IS LOADED ABOARD THE TRANSPORTER AND SLIGHTLY BEHIND SCHEDULE, THE CIRCUS TAKES TO THE ROAD...
AND INSIDE THE UFO, THE ALIEN PILOT, SAFE FROM DISCOVERY IN HIS SEALED COCKPIT, NODS WITH SATISFACTION!
MEANWHILE IN SHADO H.Q...
SORRY, COMMANDER... THE INTERCEPTOR MISSED IT...
SO THE UFO GOT THROUGH!
YES. IT LANDED IN SOUTHERN IRELAND...


RIGHT, COME ON, FOSTER! I SEEM TO BE THE ONLY ONE WHO DOESN'T MAKE MISTAKES AROUND HERE. I'M COMING WITH YOU ON THIS MISSION!
FOUR HOURS LATER, SHADO MOBILES ARE COMBING THE AREA PIN POINTED BY THE SHADO TRACKING SYSTEMS...
BY NIGHTFALL, STRAKER IS STILL ANGRY...
NO REPORTS... NO SIGNS! OKAY, PAUL, IT'S TOO DARK TO FIND ANYTHING NOW. WE'LL CONTINUE AT FIRST LIGHT!
REINFORCEMENTS ARE BROUGHT IN AND THE NEXT DAY THE AREA IS COVERED THOROUGHLY. THEN, TOWARDS EVENING, STRAKER AND FOSTER MAKE A DISCOVERY...
YES... THIS MUST BE IT... ALL THE USUAL SIGNS OF A LANDING...
ED... TAKE A LOOK AT THESE TRACKS... SOME HEAVY VEHICLES HAVE BEEN HERE.
ENQUIRIES ARE MADE AND THEY ARE LED TO THE CIRCUS SITE...
A CIRCUS! MY GUESS IS THEY SAW SOMETHING. PAUL, LET'S GET AFTER IT...
RIGHT... I'LL FIND OUT IT'S NEXT STOP...
AT THAT MOMENT, BERTIE FLAXMAN'S CIRCUS IS DOING ROARING BUSINESS...
RIGHT, FOLKS... THE GREAT SHOW IS ABOUT TO START! THIS WAY... GET YOUR TICKETS FOR ALL THE THRILLS!
IS IT FROM OUTER SPACE


THE CROWDS CLAMOUR FOR TICKETS AND SOON THE SHOW IS IN FULL SWING. OUTSIDE THE BIG TOP, THE ALIEN EMERGES FROM HIS CRAFT...
WAITING TO PERFORM HIS SENSATIONAL MIND READING ACT, MERMODA THE MYSTIC IS IN HIS CARAVAN...
HE'S COMING FOR ME... I MUST GET AWAY!
STI
BUT...
YOU CAN'T TAKE ME! I WON'T GO! WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE!
BIG TOP
AT THE CIRCUS ENTRANCE, STRAKER AND FOSTER ARRIVE...
ED! THERE IT IS! THE UFO!
BERTIE FLAXMANS CIRCUS
BERTIE FLAXMAN STOPS THEM...
YOU'VE GOT SOME EXPLAINING TO DO! WHY DIDN'T..
HOLD IT, ED... LOOK AT THE UFO... IT'S STARTING TO PULSATE...

continued on page 14

THE DEFENDERS

Emergency RED ALERT

The Harlington-Straker Film Studios appear to the outside world to be rather glamorous buildings in and around which exciting and profitable movies are made.

Yet, beneath those same buildings is a vast network of tunnels and halls, offices and laboratories where the top secret and vitally important work of Shado is controlled.

The massive underground complex is the headquarters and nerve centre of the fight against the dreaded Aliens from a planet somewhere in deep space, a dying race of humanoids who have defied time and distance in their search for replacement organs necessary to prolong their existence.

Millions of dollars have been appropriated to the Shado operation from every country in the world, for the battle against the powerful UFO machines and their sinister pilots is peculiar to no one race or creed. The whole world is under the threat of the invading Aliens who strike regularly in all parts of the globe.

For ten long years, Shado's Supreme Commander, Ed Straker nursed the building and formation of the defence systems, and despite many set backs and personal tragedies during that period, he remained completely dedicated to his duty to protect the Earth.

Time, money, effort and worry were required to make Shado operational, but the best laid defences are not entirely impregnable. On the odd occasion the superior intelligence and strength of the Aliens throws Shado Headquarters into moments of sheer panic and extreme danger.

There was the time when two UFO's eluded the highly sophisticated tracking systems of Moonbase and SID, the Space Intruder Detector satellite, and managed to land uncomfortably close to the film studios.

Two Aliens, whose mission was obviously centred on the destruction of Shado Headquarters, came very close to achieving their aims when they managed to gain entry into Shado H.Q's access corridors that lead to the vital main control centre.

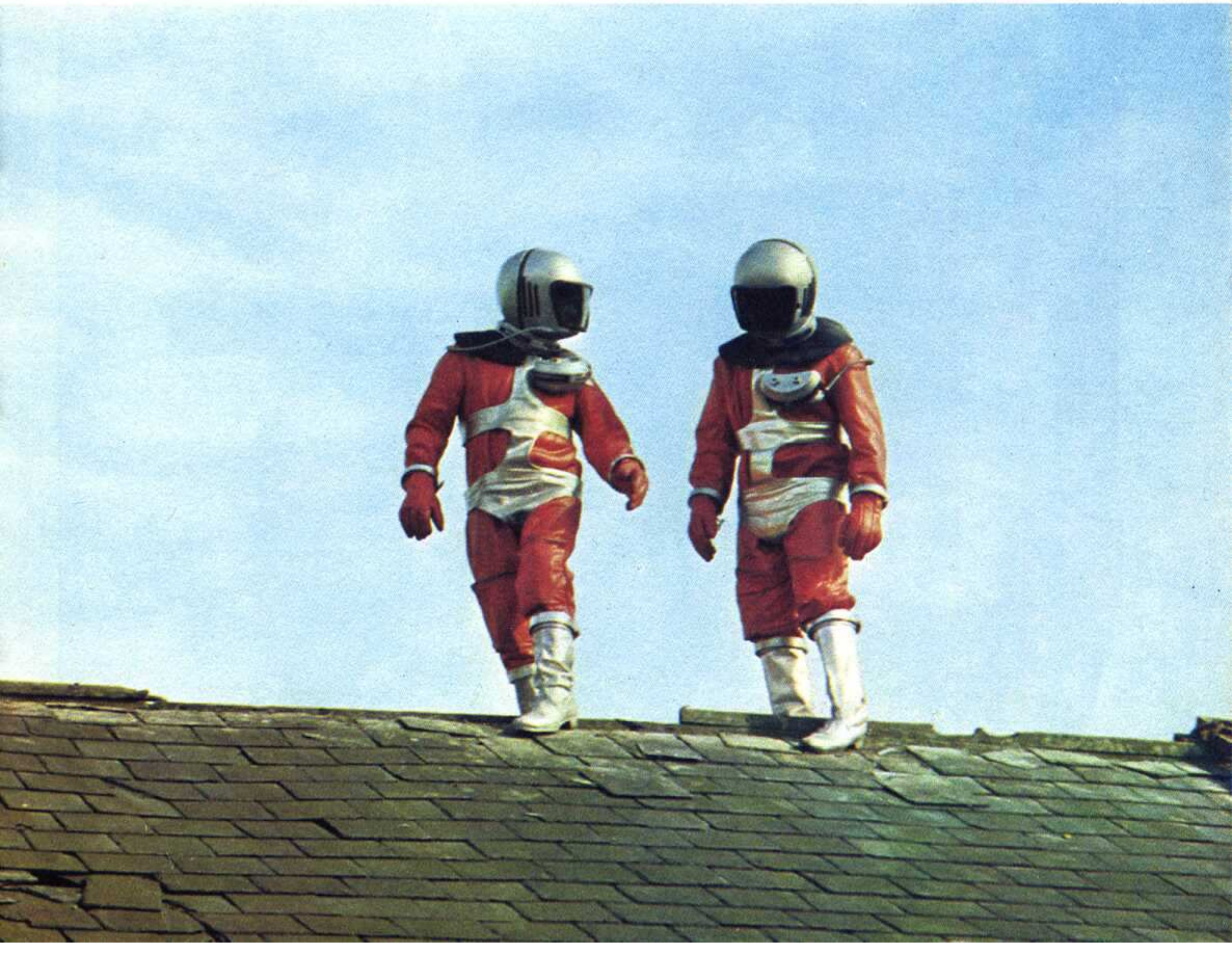
Bravery and guile, organisation and instant decision making were the qualities called upon by the hundreds of Shado personnel, and only after valiant efforts in all these departments of human endeavour were the Aliens finally trapped on the roof tops of the film studios' outlying buildings.

A similar crisis could develop at any time and the technicians, scientists, controllers and operatives at Shado Headquarters must remain on constant alert for the danger signs.

Those highly trained Shado staff members control the destinies of countless men, women and children who might fall innocent prey to the greatest enemy the world has ever known.

The valuable and complex machinery and equipment housed in the Shado control centre is designed to save lives. And ironically, the very people it continues to protect can never be made aware of its function . . . for widespread knowledge of the Shado operation and the Alien invasion could result in blind panic and total misunderstanding.

Ed Straker and his staff must wage a powerful and silent battle and their courage and devotion to duty must go unrewarded, for the Shado password is secrecy!



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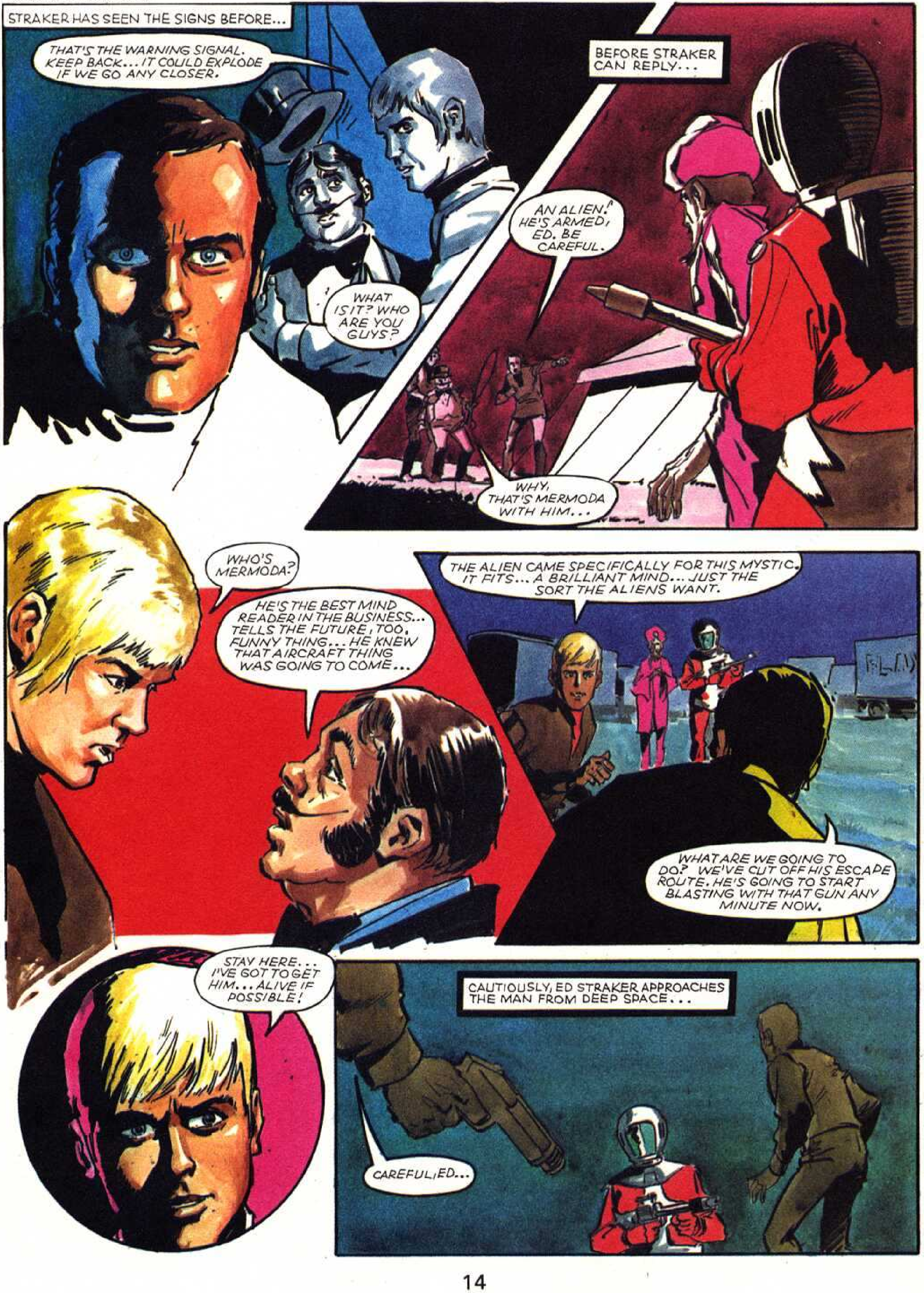
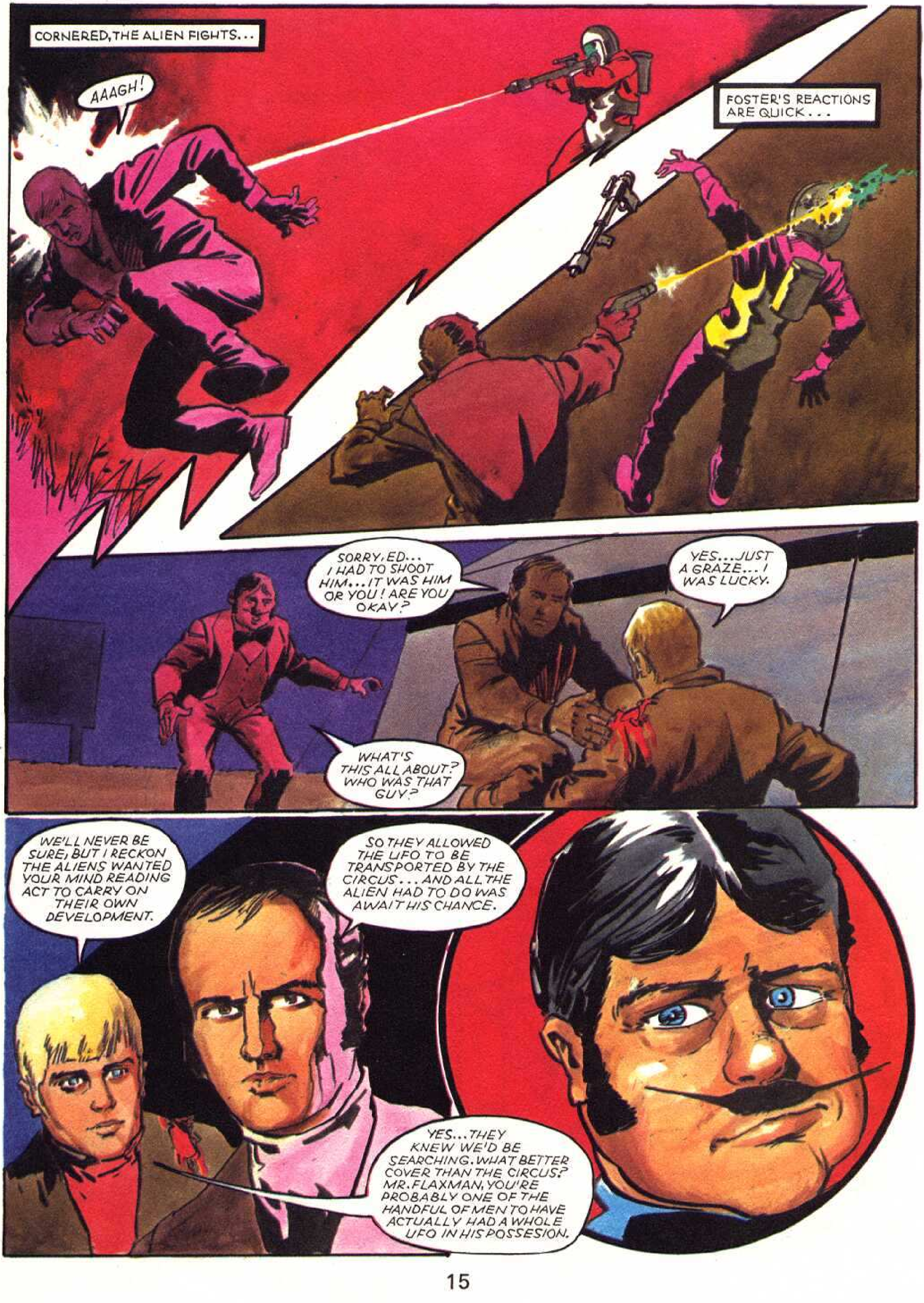
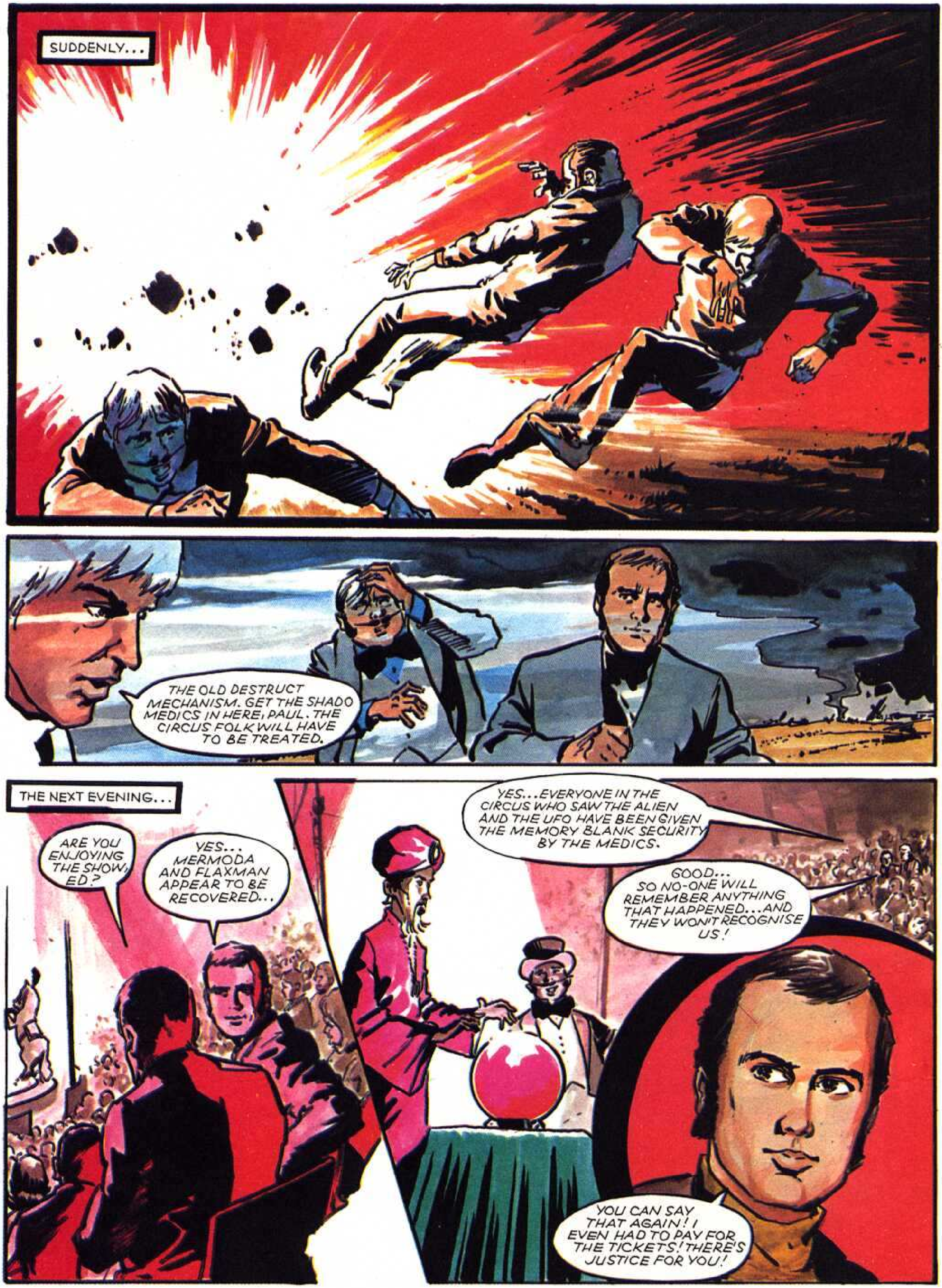
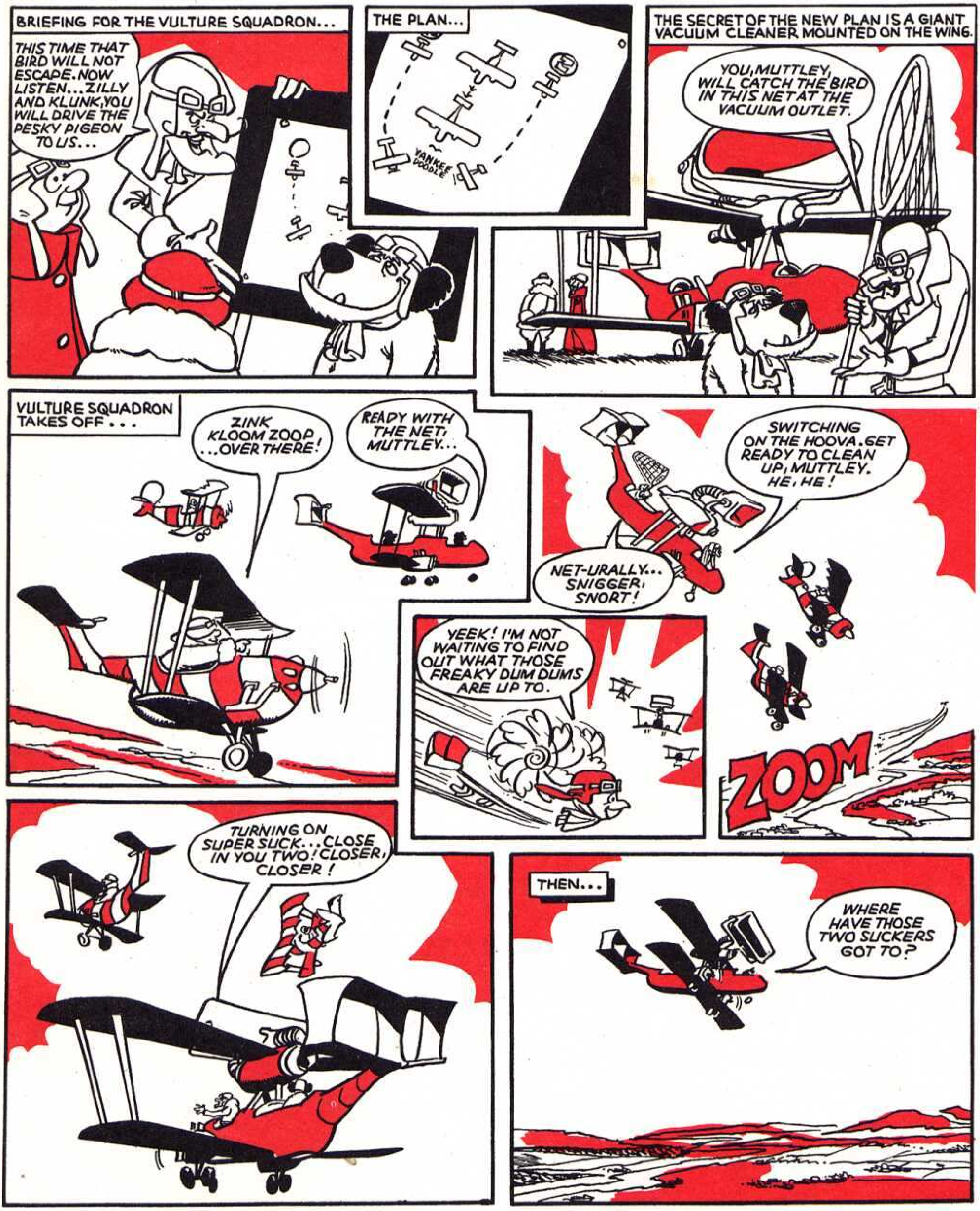
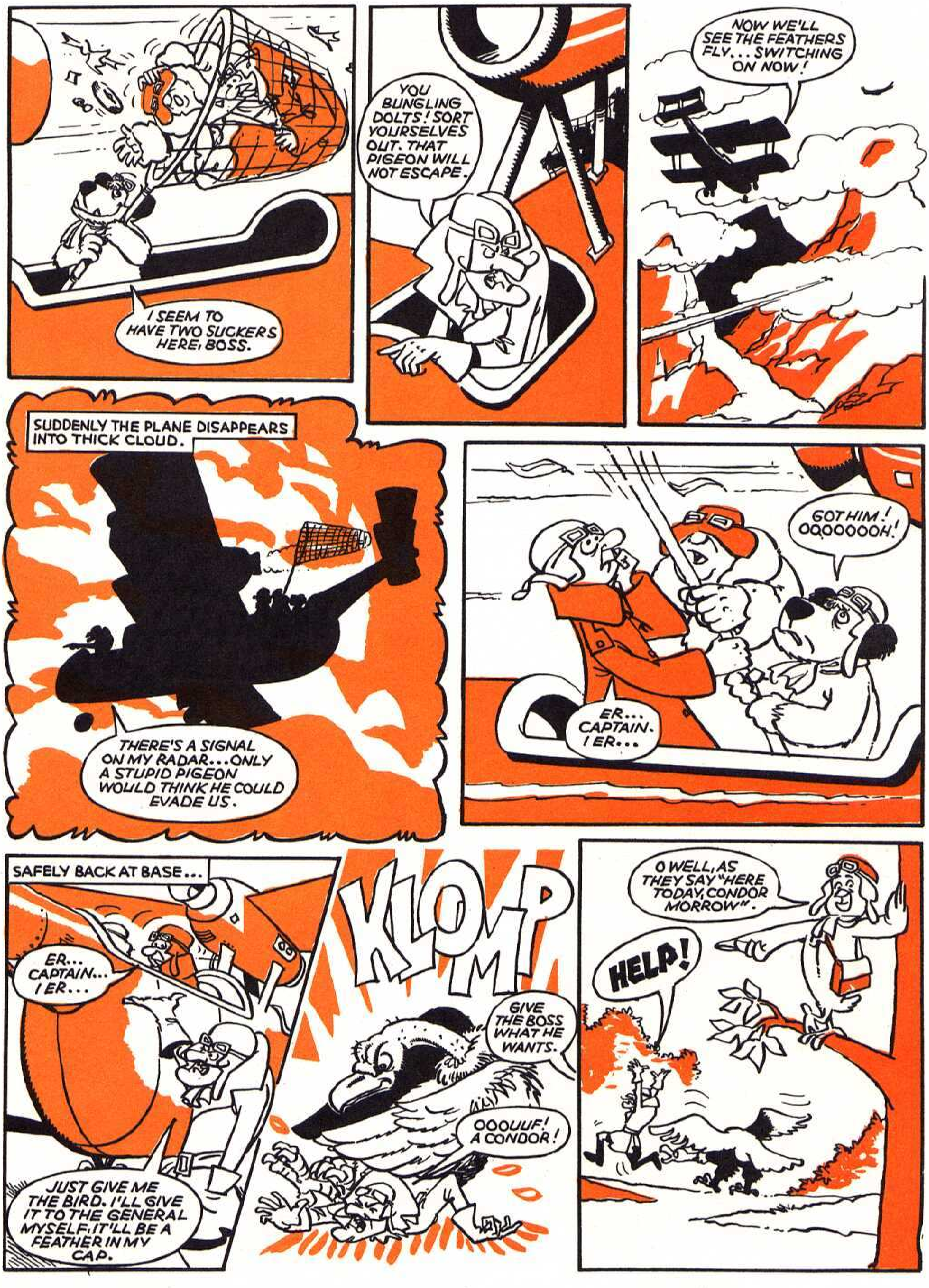

STRAKER HAS SEEN THE SIGNS BEFORE...
THAT'S THE WARNING SIGNAL. KEEP BACK... IT COULD EXPLODE IF WE GO ANY CLOSER.
WHAT IS IT? WHO ARE YOU GUYS?
BEFORE STRAKER CAN REPLY...
AN ALIEN! HE'S ARMED, ED. BE CAREFUL.
WHY, THAT'S MERMODA WITH HIM...
WHO'S MERMODA?
HE'S THE BEST MIND READER IN THE BUSINESS... TELLS THE FUTURE, TOO. FUNNY THING... HE KNEW THAT AIRCRAFT THING WAS GOING TO COME...
THE ALIEN CAME SPECIFICALLY FOR THIS MYSTIC. IT FITS... A BRILLIANT MIND... JUST THE SORT THE ALIENS WANT.
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? WE'VE CUT OFF HIS ESCAPE ROUTE. HE'S GOING TO START BLASTING WITH THAT GUN ANY MINUTE NOW.
STAY HERE... I'VE GOT TO GET HIM... ALIVE IF POSSIBLE!
CAUTIOUSLY, ED STRAKER APPROACHES THE MAN FROM DEEP SPACE...
CAREFUL, ED...


CORNERED, THE ALIEN FIGHTS...
AAAGH!
FOSTER'S REACTIONS ARE QUICK...
SORRY, ED... I HAD TO SHOOT HIM... IT WAS HIM OR YOU! ARE YOU OKAY?
YES...JUST A GRAZE... I WAS LUCKY.
WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT? WHO WAS THAT GUY?
WE'LL NEVER BE SURE, BUT I RECKON THE ALIENS WANTED YOUR MIND READING ACT TO CARRY ON THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT.
SO THEY ALLOWED THE UFO TO BE TRANSPORTED BY THE CIRCUS... AND ALL THE ALIEN HAD TO DO WAS AWAIT HIS CHANCE.
YES...THEY KNEW WE'D BE SEARCHING. WHAT BETTER COVER THAN THE CIRCUS? MR. FLAXMAN, YOU'RE PROBABLY ONE OF THE HANDFUL OF MEN TO HAVE ACTUALLY HAD A WHOLE UFO IN HIS POSSESION.


SUDDENLY...
THE OLD DESTRUCT MECHANISM. GET THE SHADO MEDICS IN HERE, PAUL. THE CIRCUS FOLK WILL HAVE TO BE TREATED.
THE NEXT EVENING...
ARE YOU ENJOYING THE SHOW, ED?
YES... MERMODA AND FLAXMAN APPEAR TO BE RECOVERED...
YES... EVERYONE IN THE CIRCUS WHO SAW THE ALIEN AND THE UFO HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE MEMORY BLANK SECURITY BY THE MEDICS.
GOOD... SO NO-ONE WILL REMEMBER ANYTHING THAT HAPPENED... AND THEY WON'T RECOGNISE US!
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN! I EVEN HAD TO PAY FOR THE TICKETS! THERE'S JUSTICE FOR YOU!

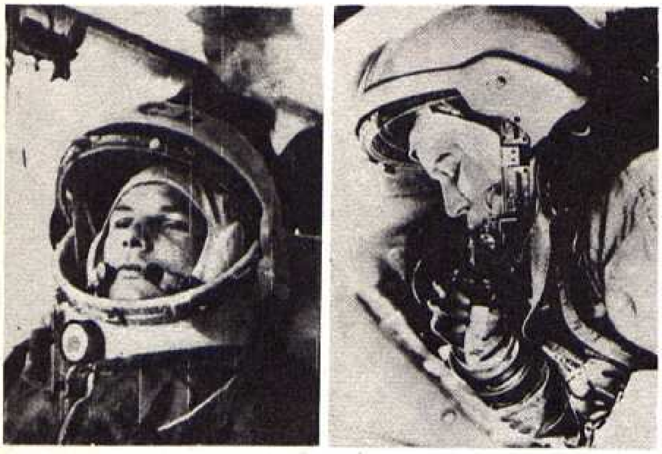
DASTARDLY AND MUTTLEY


BRIEFING FOR THE VULTURE SQUADRON...
THIS TIME THAT BIRD WILL NOT ESCAPE. NOW LISTEN... ZILLY AND KLUNK, YOU WILL DRIVE THE PESKY PIGEON TO US...
THE PLAN...
YANKEE DOODLE
THE SECRET OF THE NEW PLAN IS A GIANT VACUUM CLEANER MOUNTED ON THE WING.
YOU, MUTTLEY, WILL CATCH THE BIRD IN THIS NET AT THE VACUUM OUTLET.
VULTURE SQUADRON TAKES OFF...
ZINK KLOOM ZOOP ...OVER THERE!
READY WITH THE NET, MUTTLEY...
SWITCHING ON THE HOOVA. GET READY TO CLEAN UP, MUTTLEY. HE, HE!
NET-URALLY... SNIGGER, SNORT!
YEEK! I'M NOT WAITING TO FIND OUT WHAT THOSE FREAKY DUM DUMS ARE UP TO.
ZOOM
TURNING ON SUPER SUCK... CLOSE IN YOU TWO! CLOSER, CLOSER!
THEN...
WHERE HAVE THOSE TWO SUCKERS GOT TO?


I SEEM TO HAVE TWO SUCKERS HERE, BOSS.
YOU BUNGLING DOLTS! SORT YOURSELVES OUT. THAT PIGEON WILL NOT ESCAPE.
NOW WE'LL SEE THE FEATHERS FLY... SWITCHING ON NOW!
SUDDENLY THE PLANE DISAPPEARS INTO THICK CLOUD.
THERE'S A SIGNAL ON MY RADAR...ONLY A STUPID PIGEON WOULD THINK HE COULD EVADE US.
GOT HIM! OOOOOOOH!
ER... CAPTAIN. I ER...
SAFELY BACK AT BASE...
ER... CAPTAIN... I ER...
JUST GIVE ME THE BIRD. I'LL GIVE IT TO THE GENERAL MYSELF. IT'LL BE A FEATHER IN MY CAP.
KLOMP
GIVE THE BOSS WHAT HE WANTS.
OOOUUF! A CONDOR!
O WELL, AS THEY SAY "HERE TODAY, CONDOR MORROW".
HELP!

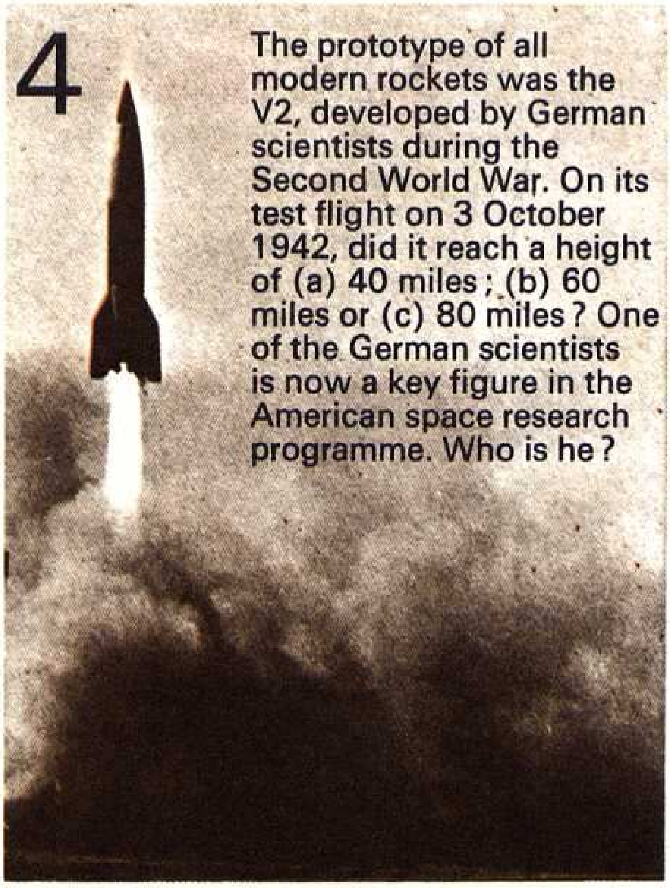
COUNTDOWN QUIZ

1 Name the first man in space and the first woman in space. What was the name given to their spaceships?



2 The world's first atomic submarine was launched on 21 January 1964. What is it called?

3 The Earth has the Moon as its satellite. How many other planets of our Solar System have satellites?



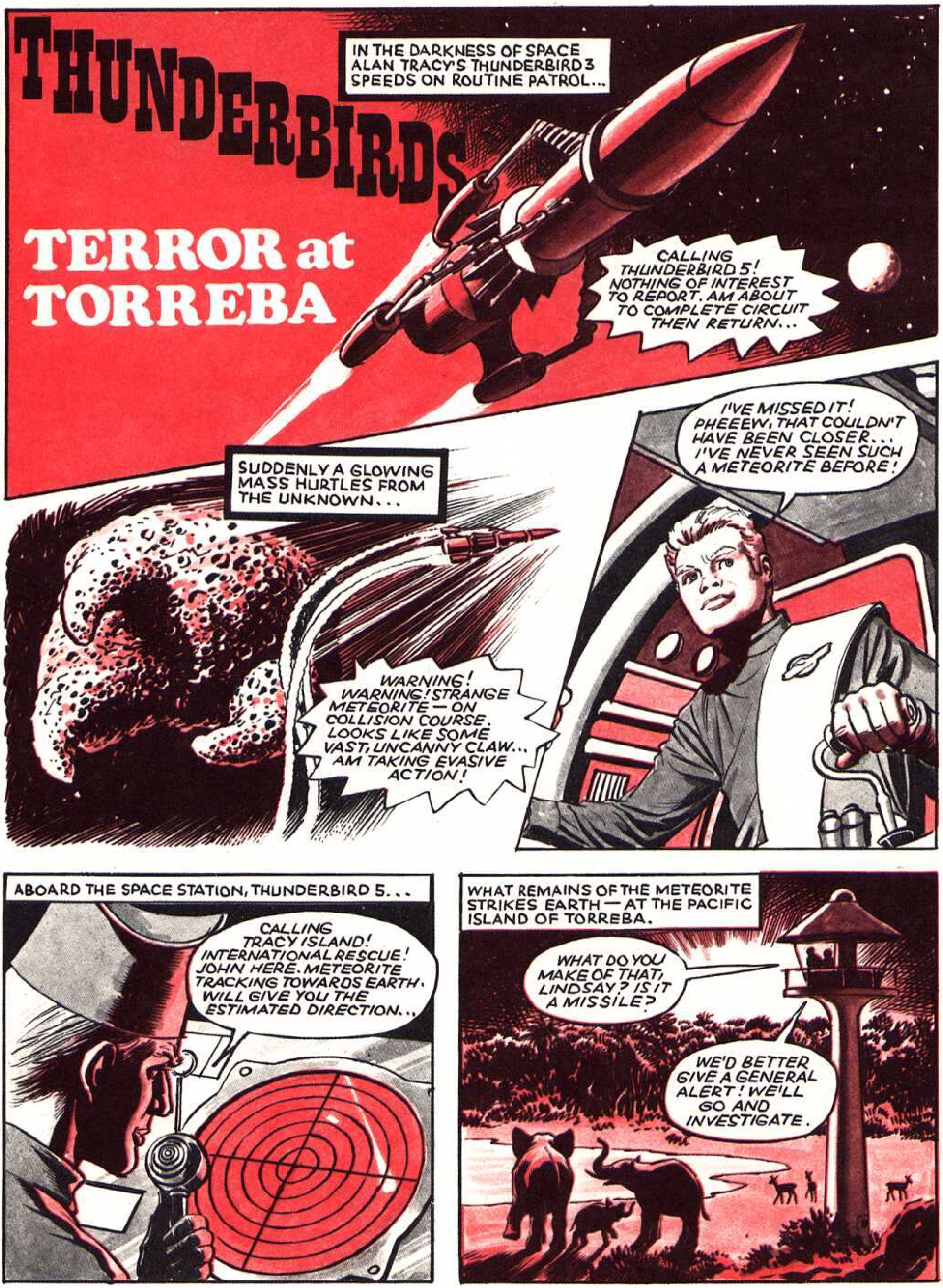
4 The prototype of all modern rockets was the V2, developed by German scientists during the Second World War. On its test flight on 3 October 1942, did it reach a height of (a) 40 miles; (b) 60 miles or (c) 80 miles? One of the German scientists is now a key figure in the American space research programme. Who is he?

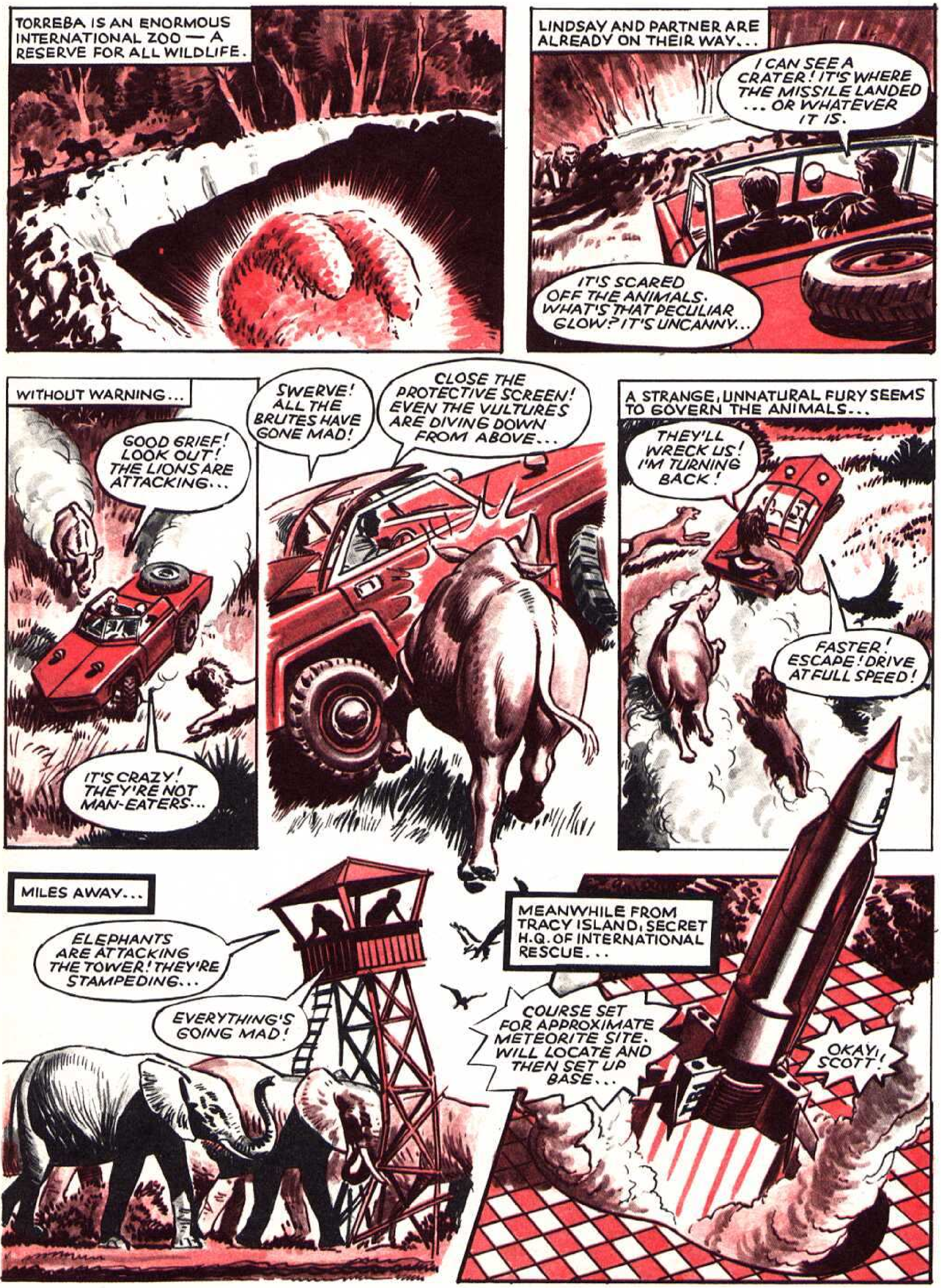
5 When a satellite is launched into orbit round the Earth, it regularly comes to its apogee and perigee positions. What do these terms mean?

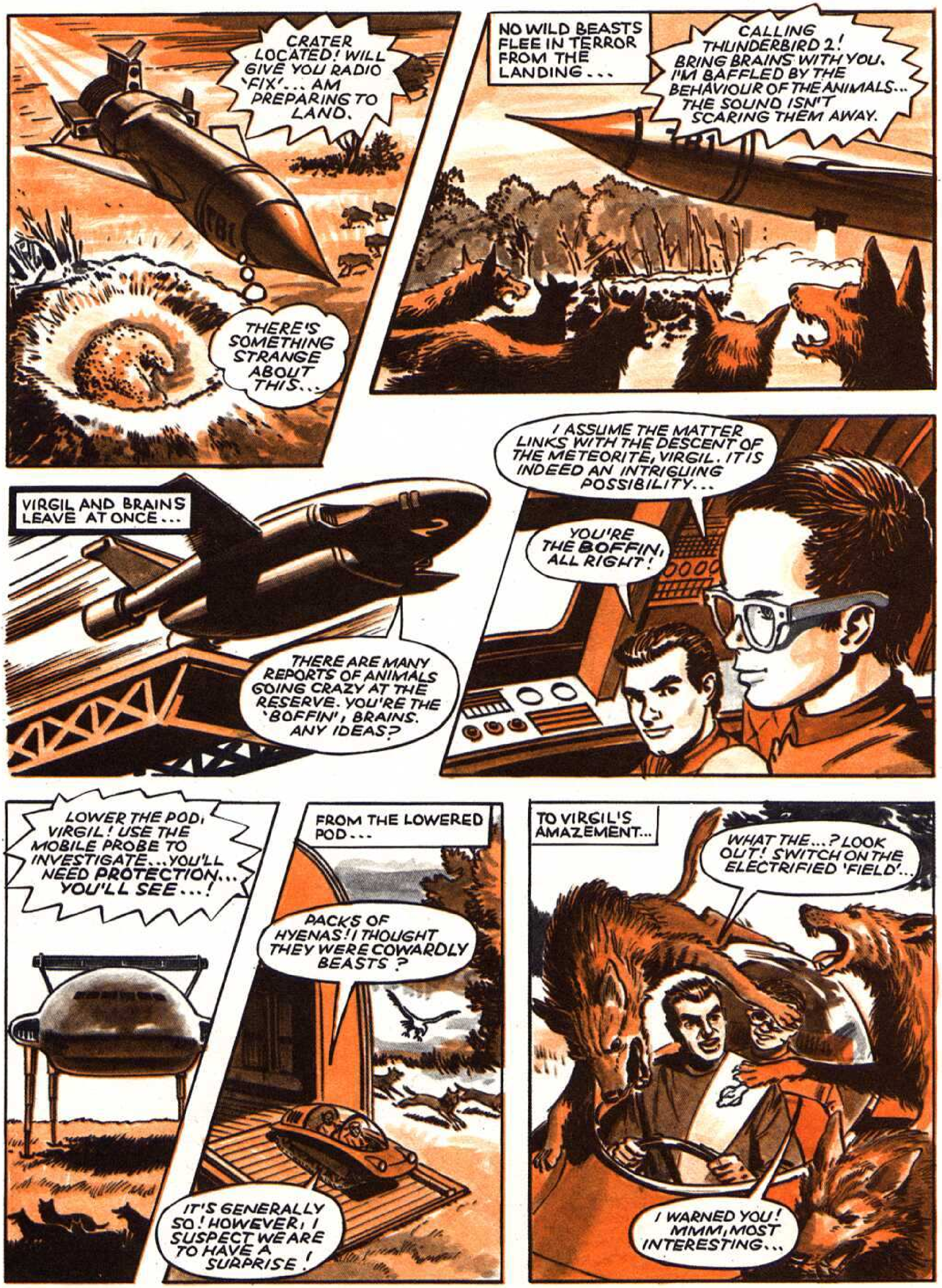
Answers on page 77

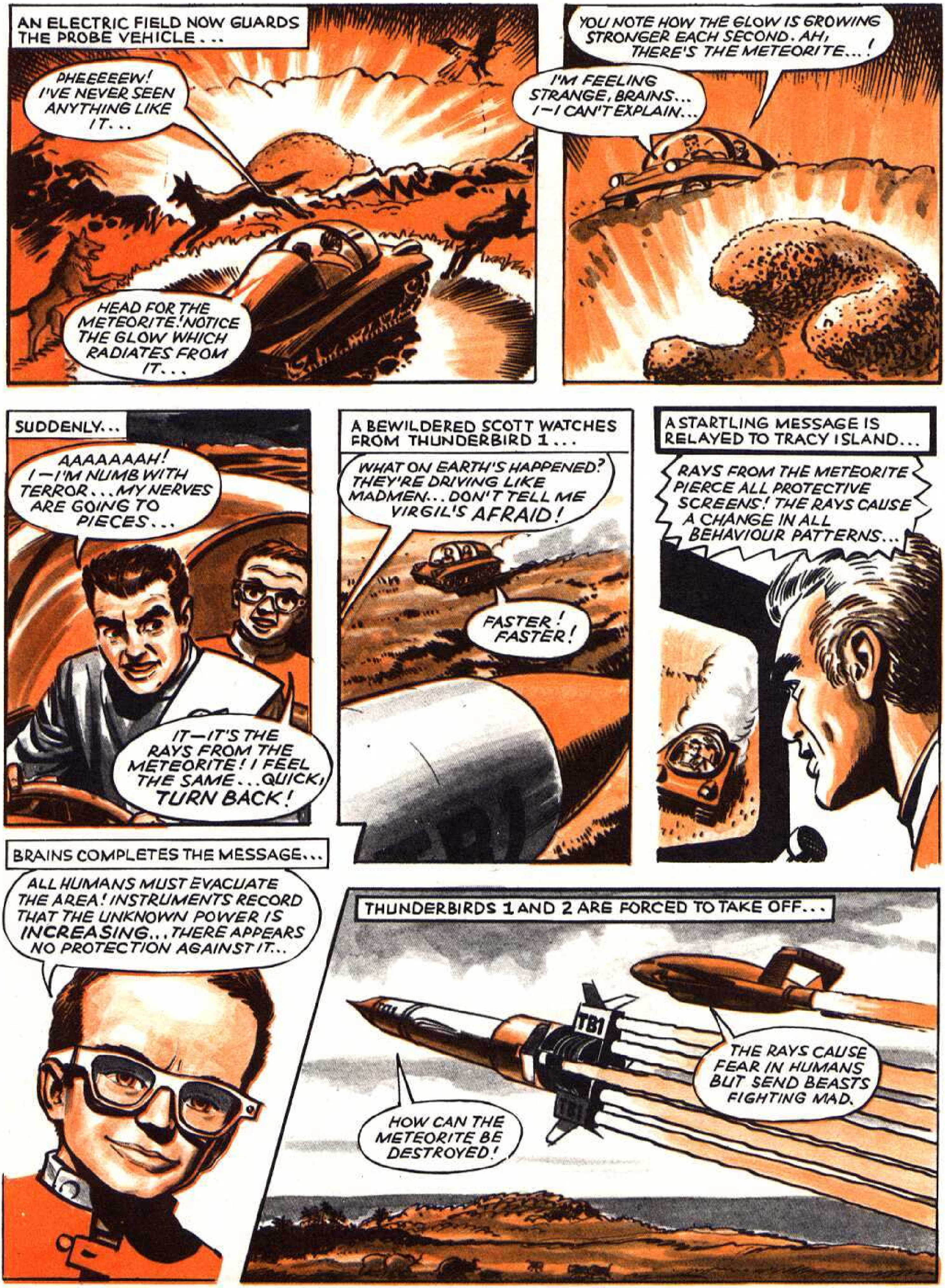
THUNDERBIRDS

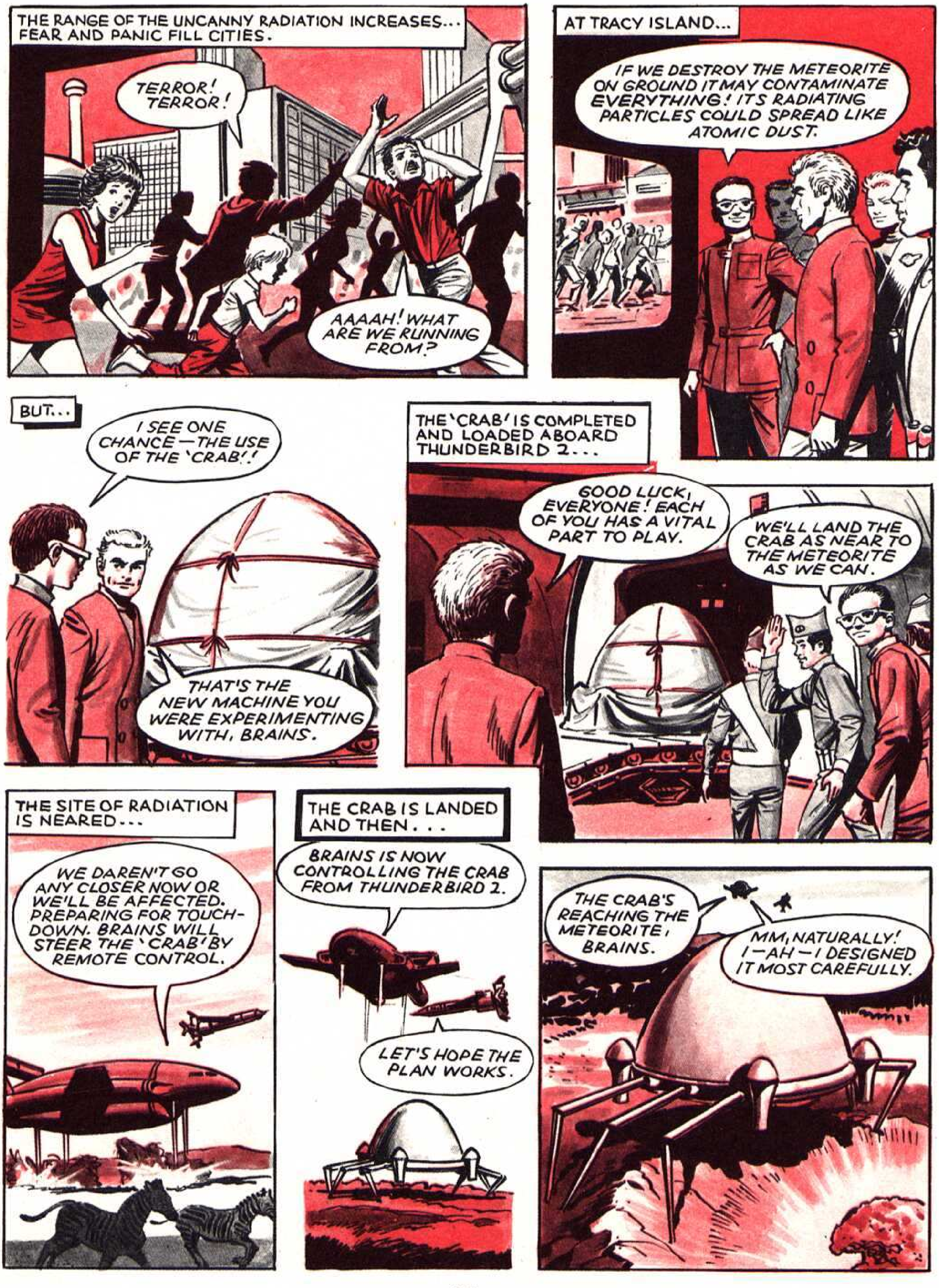
TERROR at TORREBA

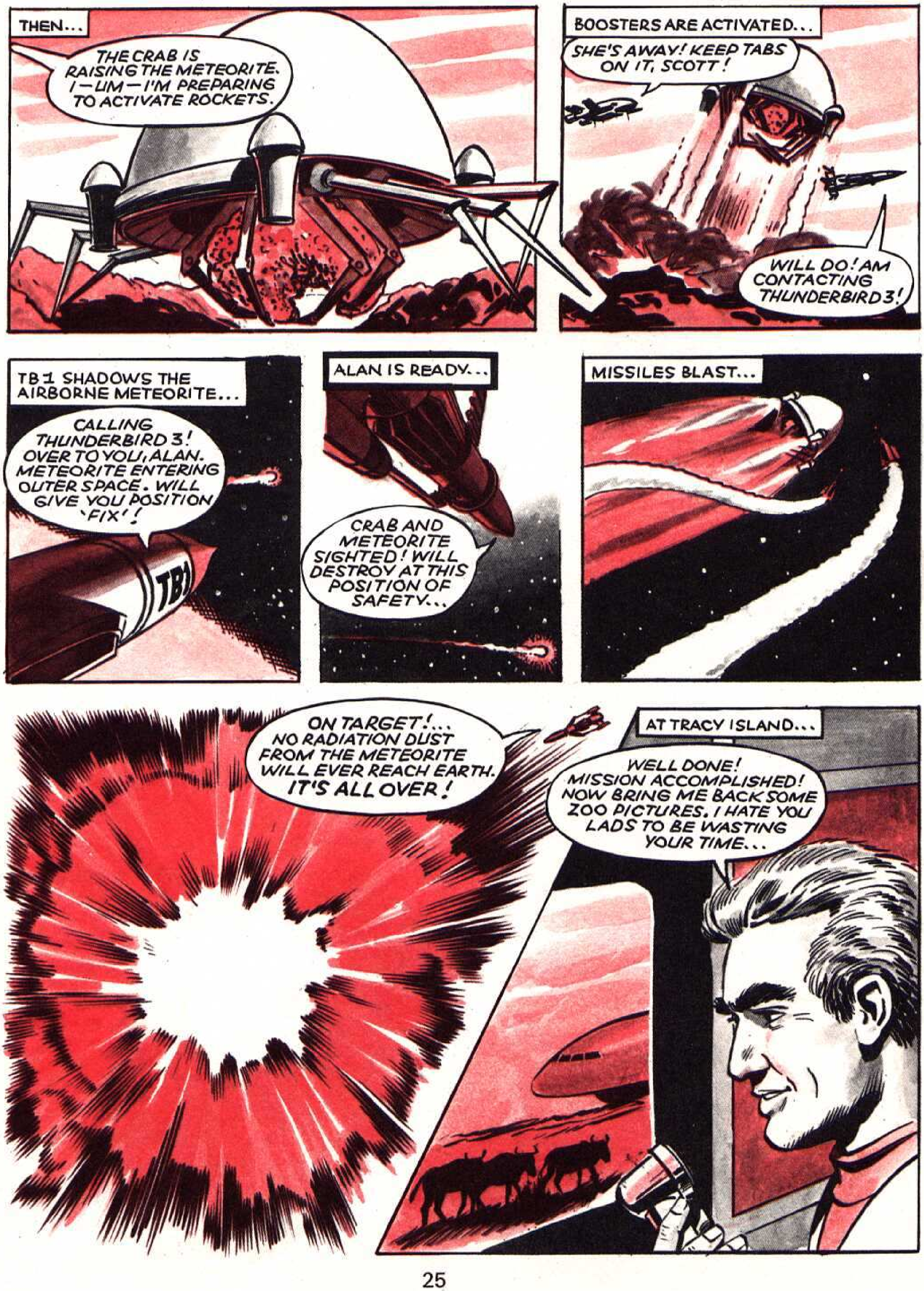

IN THE DARKNESS OF SPACE ALAN TRACY'S THUNDERBIRD 3 SPEEDS ON ROUTINE PATROL...
CALLING THUNDERBIRD 5! NOTHING OF INTEREST TO REPORT. AM ABOUT TO COMPLETE CIRCUIT THEN RETURN...
SUDDENLY A GLOWING MASS HURTLES FROM THE UNKNOWN...
WARNING! WARNING! STRANGE METEORITE — ON COLLISION COURSE. LOOKS LIKE SOME VAST, UNCANNY CLAW... AM TAKING EVASIVE ACTION!
I'VE MISSED IT! PHEEEW, THAT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN CLOSER... I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH A METEORITE BEFORE!
ABOARD THE SPACE STATION, THUNDERBIRD 5...
CALLING TRACY ISLAND! INTERNATIONAL RESCUE! JOHN HERE. METEORITE TRACKING TOWARDS EARTH. WILL GIVE YOU THE ESTIMATED DIRECTION...
WHAT REMAINS OF THE METEORITE STRIKES EARTH — AT THE PACIFIC ISLAND OF TORREBA.
WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THAT, LINDSAY? IS IT A MISSILE?
WE'D BETTER GIVE A GENERAL ALERT! WE'LL GO AND INVESTIGATE.


TORREBA IS AN ENORMOUS INTERNATIONAL ZOO — A RESERVE FOR ALL WILDLIFE.
LINDSAY AND PARTNER ARE ALREADY ON THEIR WAY...
I CAN SEE A CRATER! IT'S WHERE THE MISSILE LANDED ... OR WHATEVER IT IS.
IT'S SCARED OFF THE ANIMALS. WHAT'S THAT PECULIAR GLOW? IT'S UNCANNY...
WITHOUT WARNING...
GOOD GRIEF! LOOK OUT! THE LIONS ARE ATTACKING...
IT'S CRAZY! THEY'RE NOT MAN-EATERS...
SWERVE! ALL THE BRUTES HAVE GONE MAD!
CLOSE THE PROTECTIVE SCREEN! EVEN THE VULTURES ARE DIVING DOWN FROM ABOVE...
A STRANGE, UNNATURAL FURY SEEMS TO GOVERN THE ANIMALS...
THEY'LL WRECK US! I'M TURNING BACK!
FASTER! ESCAPE! DRIVE AT FULL SPEED!
MILES AWAY...
ELEPHANTS ARE ATTACKING THE TOWER! THEY'RE STAMPEDING...
EVERYTHING'S GOING MAD!
MEANWHILE FROM TRACY ISLAND, SECRET H.Q. OF INTERNATIONAL RESCUE...
COURSE SET FOR APPROXIMATE METEORITE SITE. WILL LOCATE AND THEN SET UP BASE...
OKAY, SCOTT!


CRATER LOCATED! WILL GIVE YOU RADIO 'FIX'... AM PREPARING TO LAND.
TB1
THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THIS...
NO WILD BEASTS FLEE IN TERROR FROM THE LANDING...
CALLING THUNDERBIRD 2! BRING BRAINS WITH YOU. I'M BAFFLED BY THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE ANIMALS... THE SOUND ISN'T SCARING THEM AWAY.
TB1
VIRGIL AND BRAINS LEAVE AT ONCE...
2
THERE ARE MANY REPORTS OF ANIMALS GOING CRAZY AT THE RESERVE. YOU'RE THE 'BOFFIN', BRAINS. ANY IDEAS?
I ASSUME THE MATTER LINKS WITH THE DESCENT OF THE METEORITE, VIRGIL. IT IS INDEED AN INTRIGUING POSSIBILITY...
YOU'RE THE BOFFIN, ALL RIGHT!
LOWER THE POD, VIRGIL! USE THE MOBILE PROBE TO INVESTIGATE... YOU'LL NEED PROTECTION... YOU'LL SEE...!
FROM THE LOWERED POD...
PACKS OF HYENAS! I THOUGHT THEY WERE COWARDLY BEASTS?
IT'S GENERALLY SO! HOWEVER, I SUSPECT WE ARE TO HAVE A SURPRISE!
TO VIRGIL'S AMAZEMENT...
WHAT THE...? LOOK OUT! SWITCH ON THE ELECTRIFIED 'FIELD'...
I WARNED YOU! MMM, MOST INTERESTING...


AN ELECTRIC FIELD NOW GUARDS THE PROBE VEHICLE...
PHEEEEEW! I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT...
HEAD FOR THE METEORITE! NOTICE THE GLOW WHICH RADIATES FROM IT...
YOU NOTE HOW THE GLOW IS GROWING STRONGER EACH SECOND. AH, THERE'S THE METEORITE...!
I'M FEELING STRANGE, BRAINS... I—I CAN'T EXPLAIN...
SUDDENLY...
AAAAAAAH! I—I'M NUMB WITH TERROR... MY NERVES ARE GOING TO PIECES...
IT—IT'S THE RAYS FROM THE METEORITE! I FEEL THE SAME... QUICK, TURN BACK!
A BEWILDERED SCOTT WATCHES FROM THUNDERBIRD 1...
WHAT ON EARTH'S HAPPENED? THEY'RE DRIVING LIKE MADMEN... DON'T TELL ME VIRGIL'S AFRAID!
FASTER! FASTER!
A STARTLING MESSAGE IS RELAYED TO TRACY ISLAND...
RAYS FROM THE METEORITE PIERCE ALL PROTECTIVE SCREENS! THE RAYS CAUSE A CHANGE IN ALL BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS...
BRAINS COMPLETES THE MESSAGE...
ALL HUMANS MUST EVACUATE THE AREA! INSTRUMENTS RECORD THAT THE UNKNOWN POWER IS INCREASING... THERE APPEARS NO PROTECTION AGAINST IT...
THUNDERBIRDS 1 AND 2 ARE FORCED TO TAKE OFF...
TB1
HOW CAN THE METEORITE BE DESTROYED!
THE RAYS CAUSE FEAR IN HUMANS BUT SEND BEASTS FIGHTING MAD.


THE RANGE OF THE UNCANNY RADIATION INCREASES... FEAR AND PANIC FILL CITIES.
TERROR! TERROR!
AAAAH! WHAT ARE WE RUNNING FROM?
AT TRACY ISLAND...
IF WE DESTROY THE METEORITE ON GROUND IT MAY CONTAMINATE EVERYTHING! ITS RADIATING PARTICLES COULD SPREAD LIKE ATOMIC DUST.
BUT...
I SEE ONE CHANCE—THE USE OF THE 'CRAB'!
THAT'S THE NEW MACHINE YOU WERE EXPERIMENTING WITH, BRAINS.
THE 'CRAB' IS COMPLETED AND LOADED ABOARD THUNDERBIRD 2...
GOOD LUCK, EVERYONE! EACH OF YOU HAS A VITAL PART TO PLAY.
WE'LL LAND THE CRAB AS NEAR TO THE METEORITE AS WE CAN.
THE SITE OF RADIATION IS NEARED...
WE DAREN'T GO ANY CLOSER NOW OR WE'LL BE AFFECTED. PREPARING FOR TOUCH-DOWN. BRAINS WILL STEER THE 'CRAB' BY REMOTE CONTROL.
THE CRAB IS LANDED AND THEN...
BRAINS IS NOW CONTROLLING THE CRAB FROM THUNDERBIRD 2.
LET'S HOPE THE PLAN WORKS.
THE CRAB'S REACHING THE METEORITE, BRAINS.
MM, NATURALLY! I—AH—I DESIGNED IT MOST CAREFULLY.


THEN...
THE CRAB IS RAISING THE METEORITE. I—UM—I'M PREPARING TO ACTIVATE ROCKETS.
BOOSTERS ARE ACTIVATED...
SHE'S AWAY! KEEP TABS ON IT, SCOTT!
WILL DO! AM CONTACTING THUNDERBIRD 3!
TB 1 SHADOWS THE AIRBORNE METEORITE...
CALLING THUNDERBIRD 3! OVER TO YOU, ALAN. METEORITE ENTERING OUTER SPACE. WILL GIVE YOU POSITION 'FIX'!
TB1
ALAN IS READY...
CRAB AND METEORITE SIGHTED! WILL DESTROY AT THIS POSITION OF SAFETY...
MISSILES BLAST...
ON TARGET!... NO RADIATION DUST FROM THE METEORITE WILL EVER REACH EARTH. IT'S ALL OVER!
AT TRACY ISLAND...
WELL DONE! MISSION ACCOMPLISHED! NOW BRING ME BACK SOME ZOO PICTURES. I HATE YOU LADS TO BE WASTING YOUR TIME...

THINK TANK!

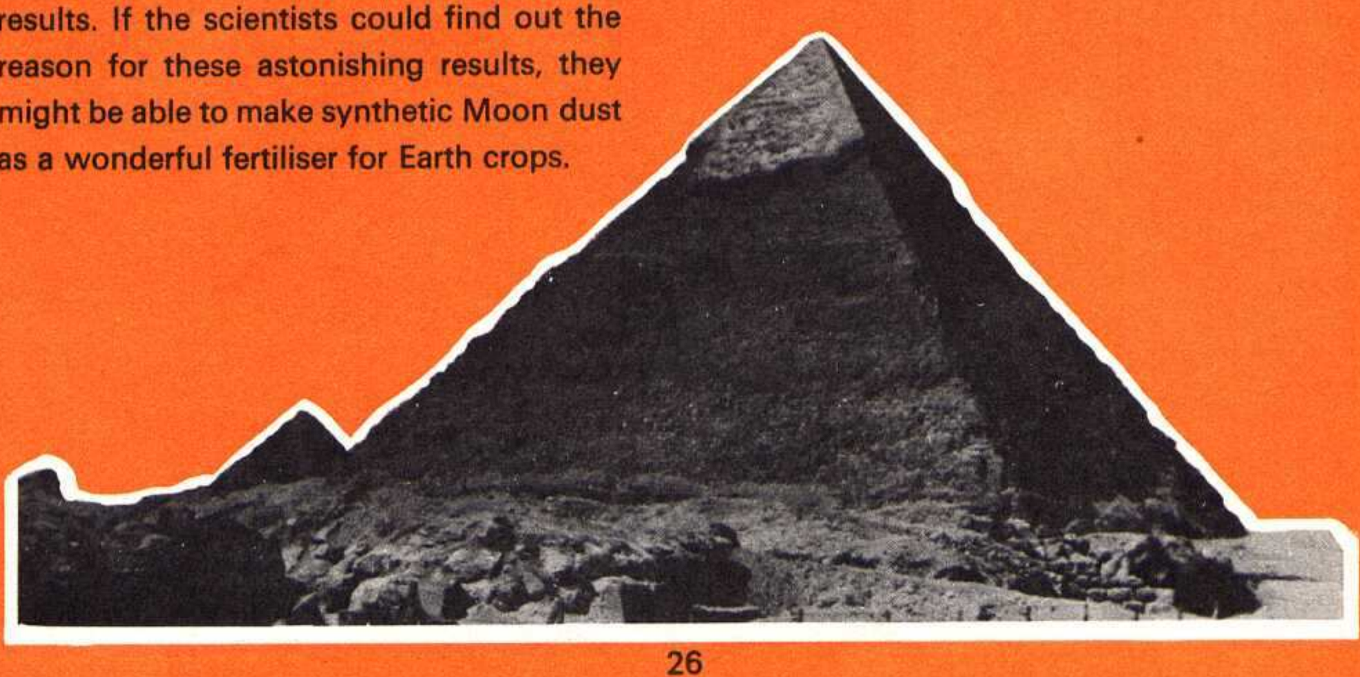
News from the Frontiers of Science

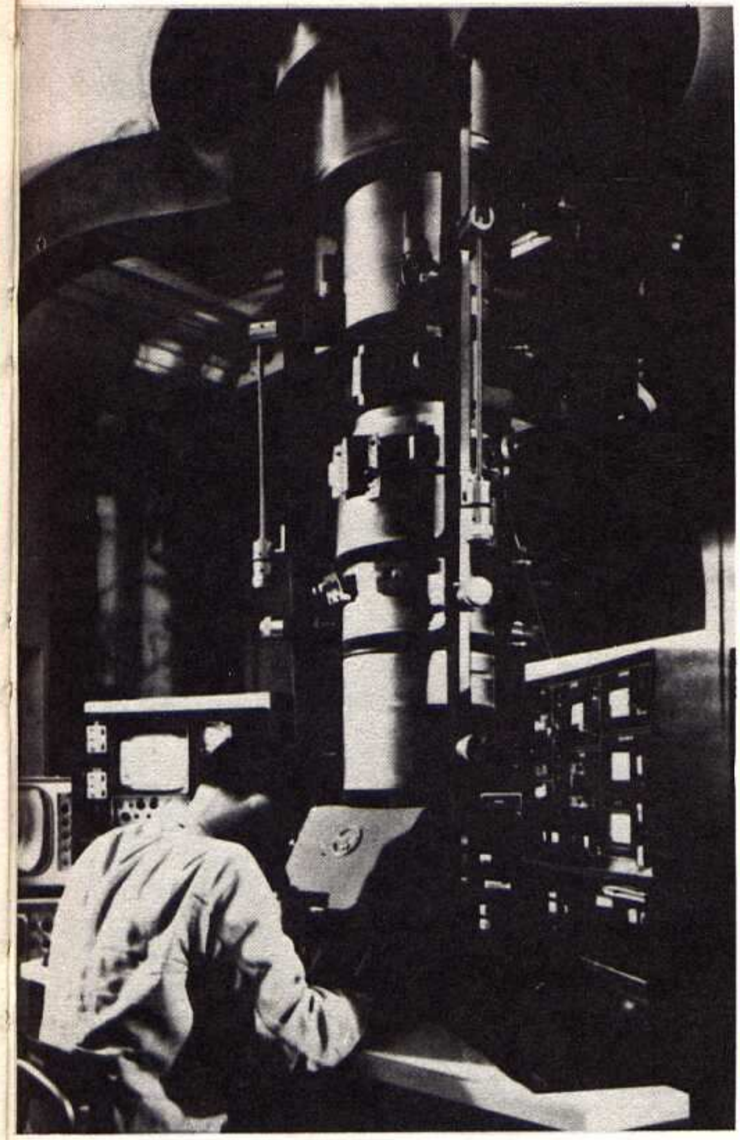
Moon dust fertiliser

Laboratory tests at Houston with the Moon dust brought back by the Apollo spacemen show that some plants treated with the dust actually grow faster or become greener than plants growing in ordinary soil beds. The first experiments used primitive plants like liverwort and fern, and when they showed an increase in size the dust was sprinkled over lettuce seeds, with similar results. If the scientists could find out the reason for these astonishing results, they might be able to make synthetic Moon dust as a wonderful fertiliser for Earth crops.

Pyramid probe

The advances of science have now made it possible to search ancient pyramids for hidden passageways and chambers without breaking them open. A highly-sensitive device called a magnetometer can measure the magnetic field of a pyramid and record the location and intensity of any variations produced. For example, two Californian scientists were able to show that a mound at La Venta in Tabasco, Mexico, contained highly magnetic basalt, which was used to make statues in the period of the Olmec culture, and this could be distinguished from the non-magnetic clay of the mound itself. They therefore concluded that it would be worth carrying out a physical search for the concealed monuments. By such means pyramids need not be unnecessarily broken into.



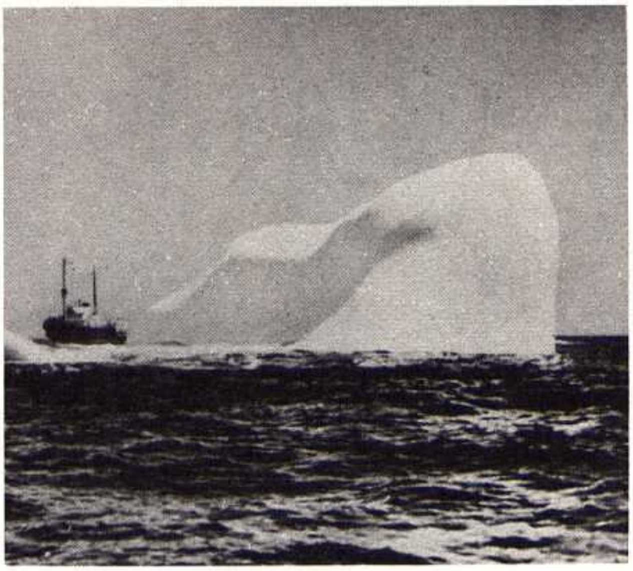


Scanning electron microscope

Most people know about the giant radio telescopes that explore the mysteries of Outer Space – but an instrument that is just as astonishing is the Scanning Electron Microscope which can peer into the world of the infinitely small. A tiny subject is placed in a slot at the base of the microscope and bombarded with electrons. Then, as the beam scans the surface, a control console shows an enormously enlarged picture which can be photographed. Enlargements up to 150,000 times can be produced. Latest developments of this amazing microscope have succeeded in producing moving images in 3D.

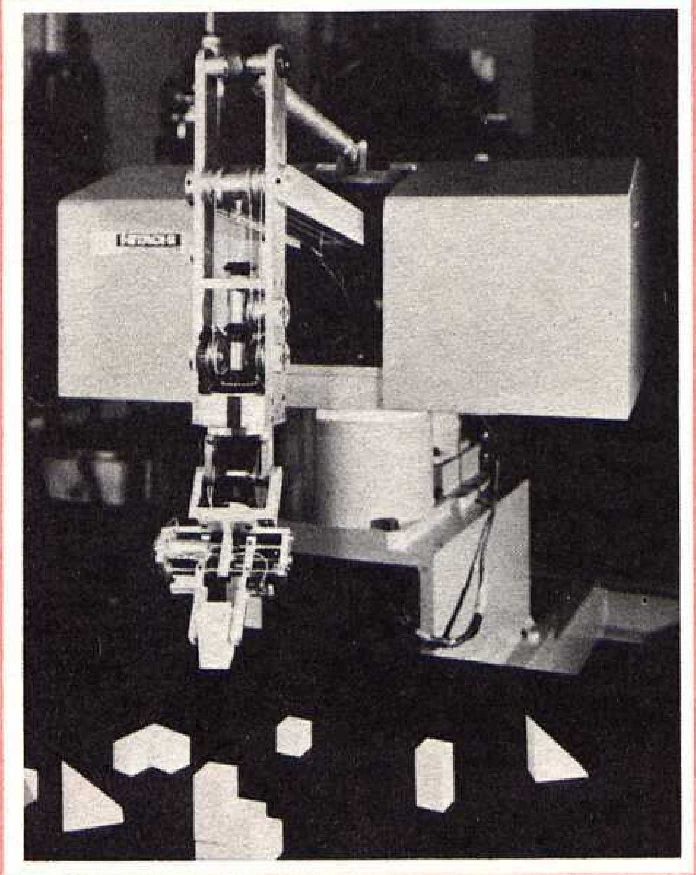
Iceberg water supply

As the Antarctic contains about 80% of the world's fresh water, two American scientists have come up with the idea of towing large icebergs from there to arid areas along the west coast of South America, Australia and the west coast of Africa. They calculate that even though most of the iceberg would melt in transit, there would still be enough left when it arrived at its destination to provide fresh water at a tenth of the cost of desalinated sea water, and of much better quality, since the icesheet from which the berg would originate is essentially distilled water. The actual towing would be performed by a tug of seven- or eight-thousand h.p., moving the iceberg at about half a knot.



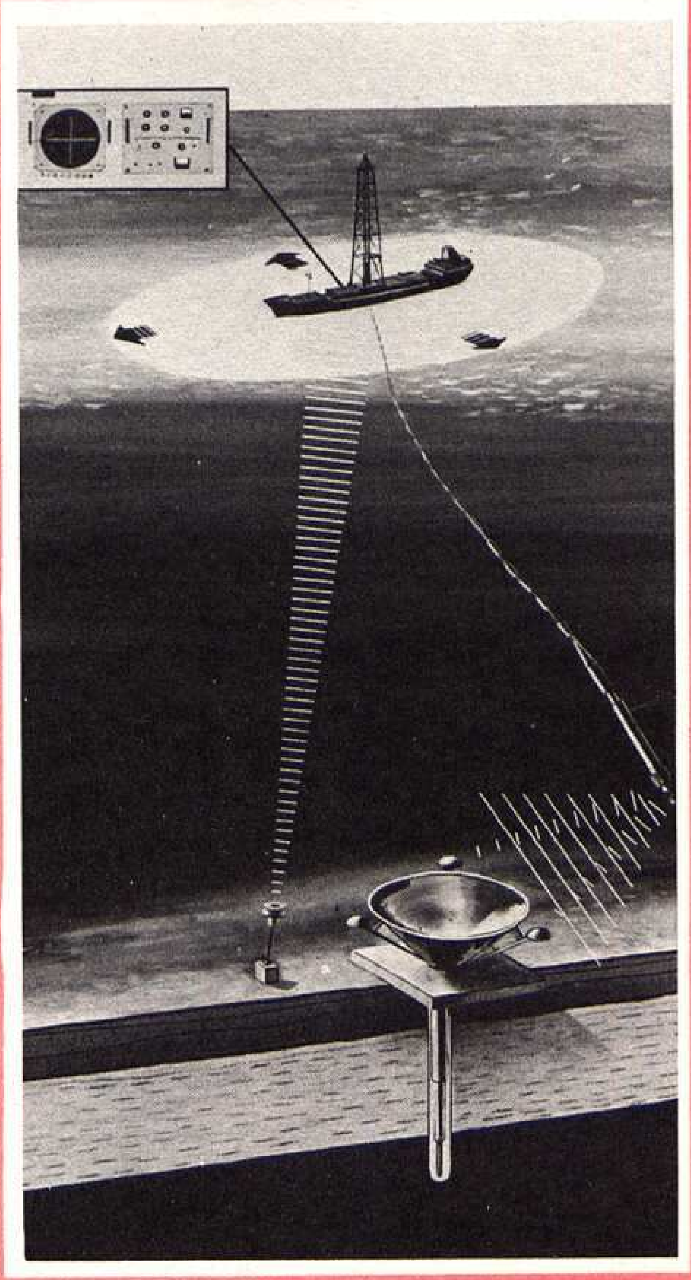
Thinking robot

A machine that 'thinks' – that is what this strange combination of two TV cameras, a computer and a 'hand' really is. Called the HIVIP Mark 1, this Japanese-designed marvel can put together the pieces of an object in the following way: one camera is directed at the plans of an object showing how it is assembled and the robot's memory stores away the details. When the other camera focuses on the pieces that make up the object, the robot draws on its computer memory to put together the pieces with its 'hand', assembling them with the minimum number of digital movements.



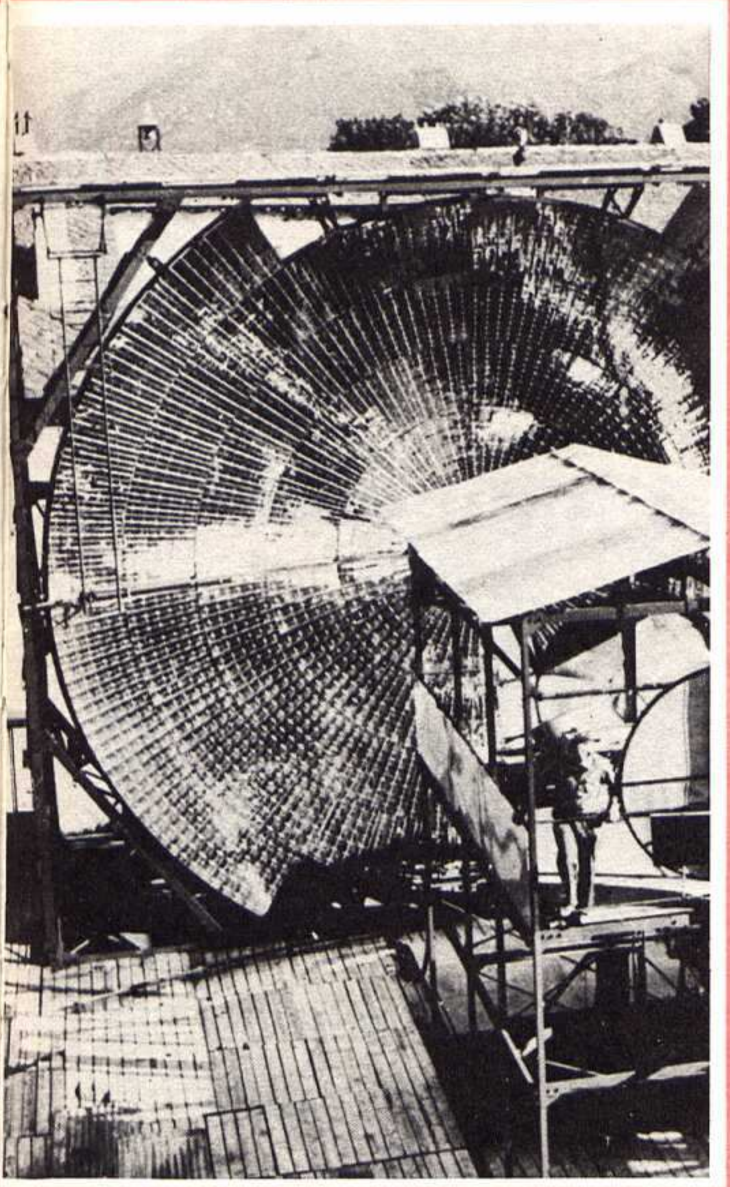
Replacing the bit underwater

At one time deep sea drilling engineers were not able to restart operations in a hole once the drill string had been pulled out. A system has now been devised, however, that enables a worn-out drilling bit to be replaced and drilling to be continued in the same bore hole. It is all done by means of a scanning sonar system which enables sound echoes received by the transmitter attached to the bit to be amplified and transmitted to the control unit on the ship's bridge. Once the acoustic reflectors on the re-entry cone on the sea bed have been located, the ship is manoeuvred until the drill pipe is immediately over the hole and ready for lowering. This technique will enable scientists to drill deep into hard rock on the ocean floor.



Sunshine fuel

One day the Earth will run out of available sources of power, such as oil and coal, but by that time the enormous energy of the Sun will have been harnessed. Solar cells which convert sunlight into electricity are already in use in spacecraft to operate equipment. Solar cookers have been designed for use in countries where there is plenty of sunshine, houses have been built to trap the Sun's energy in their walls in the summer so that the heat can be used in winter months, and cars and boats have successfully operated for short distances by means of the Sun's power. It is a far cry from the simple greenhouse to the French solar furnace in the Pyrenees, where scientists are experimenting with using reflected sunlight to heat houses, but the shape of things to come can already be clearly seen.

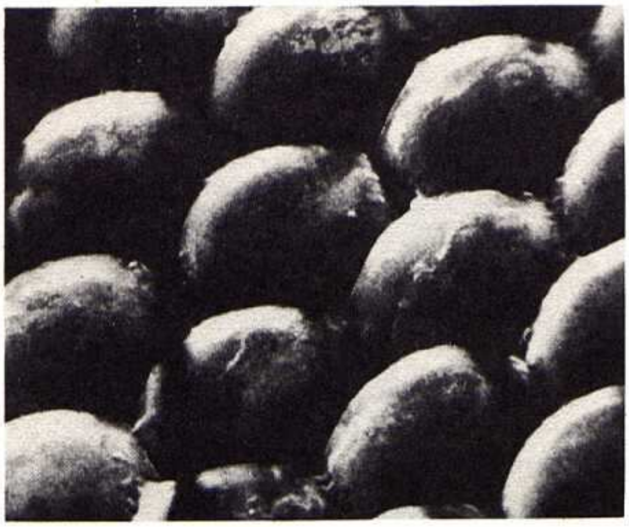


Mars capsule

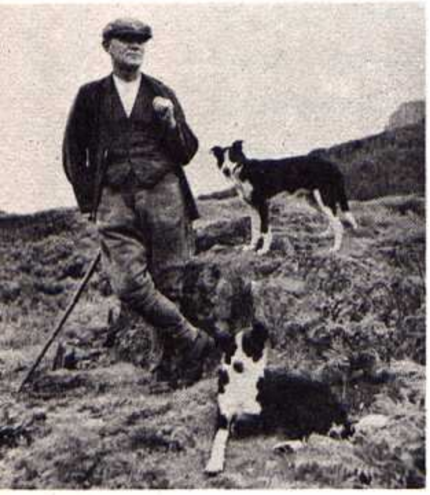
Before men are sent to Mars, scientists will want to know what conditions are like on the surface of the planet. This strange, wheel-shaped object is a model of a planetary landing craft designed by the U.S. space agency. It has been rigorously tested to ensure that it can stand up to conditions on Mars. Mars has a thin atmosphere and the 65-lb. craft has been designed to land by parachute – even so it will hit the surface at about 80 m.p.h. The craft was therefore dropped by helicopter from a height of 250 feet and successfully survived the impact at this speed. Thirty seconds after striking the ground, the craft's radio transmitter turned on and operated for a scheduled 20 minutes. Three minutes after impact, a 4-ft. telescopic boom emerged containing a tiny anemometer for measuring wind velocity. As well as wind measurement, other experiments will include investigation of surface pressure, temperature and water vapour.

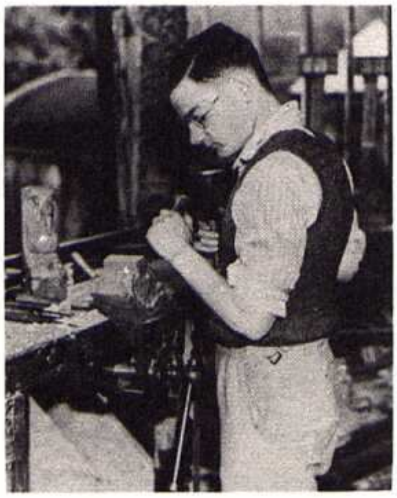
COUNTDOWN QUIZ

1 This is a photograph of an object magnified 650 times. Is it (a) a bath sponge, (b) a file, (c) a fly's eye, (d) an orange?



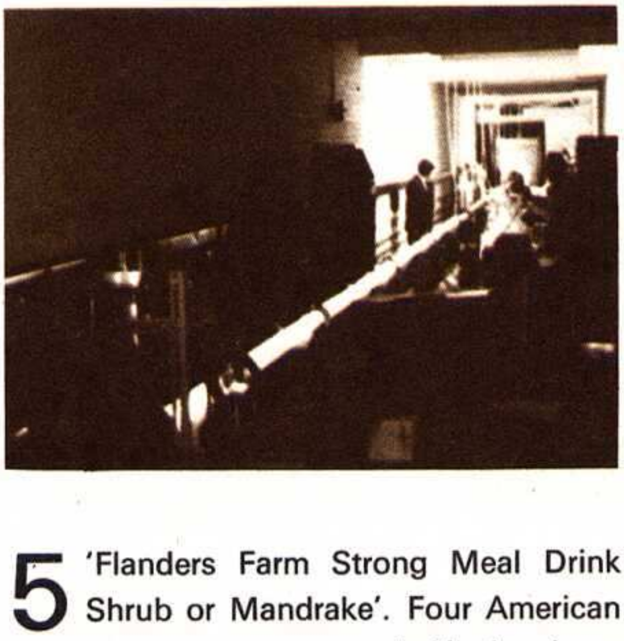
2 Here are pictures of two men whose jobs suggest the names of two American spacemen. For example, a picture of a Scottish glen would have indicated Col. John Glenn. Who are they?





3 Where would you look to find the Lake of Dreams, the Bay of Rainbows and the Sea of Serenity?

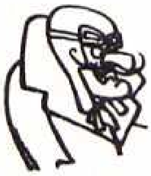
4 Laser beams can cut through diamonds, perform surgical operations, map the surface of the Earth, and do many other wonderful things. What do the letters in 'laser' mean?



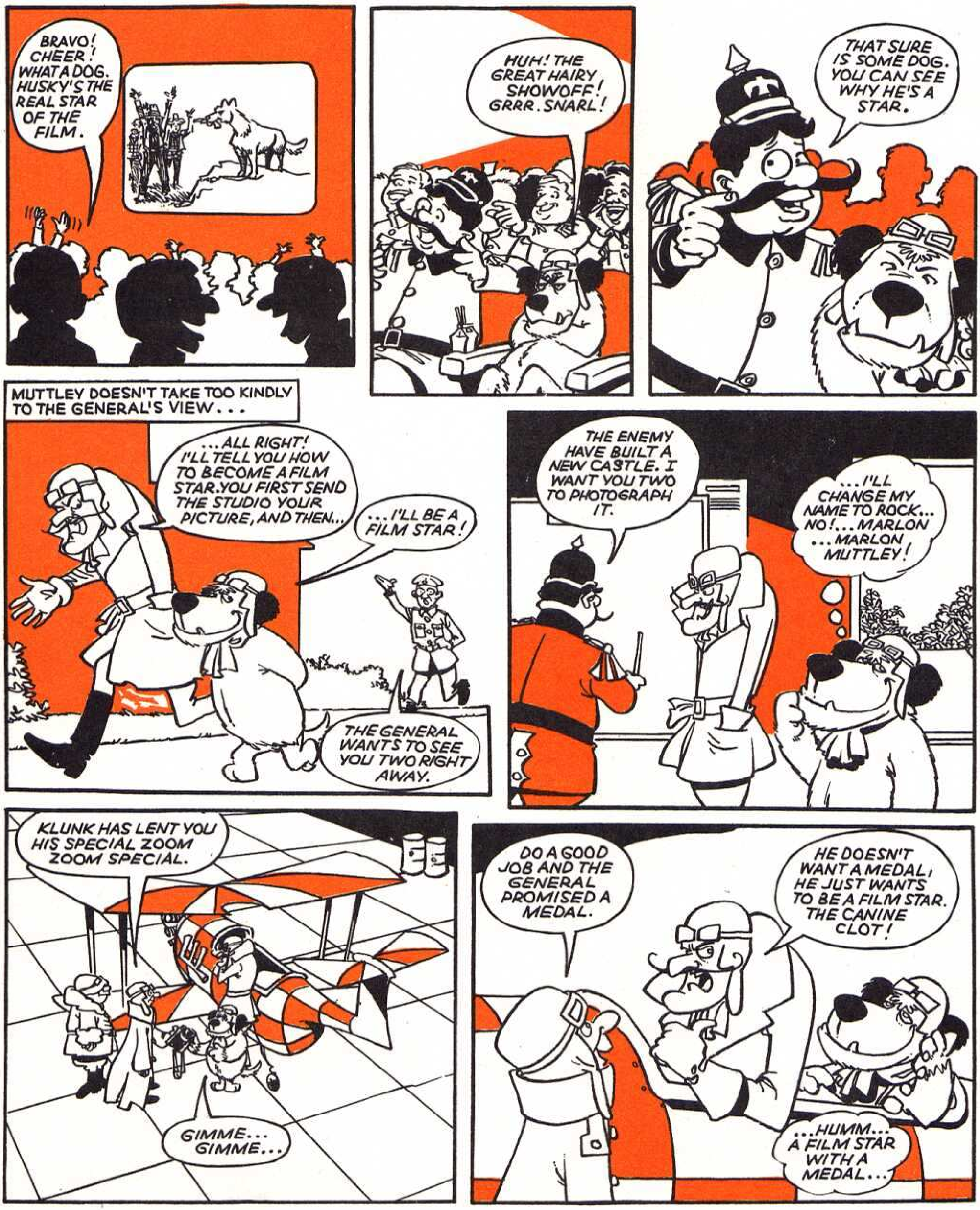
5 'Flanders Farm Strong Meal Drink Shrub or Mandrake'. Four American spacemen are concealed in the above conglomeration of words. Can you find them?

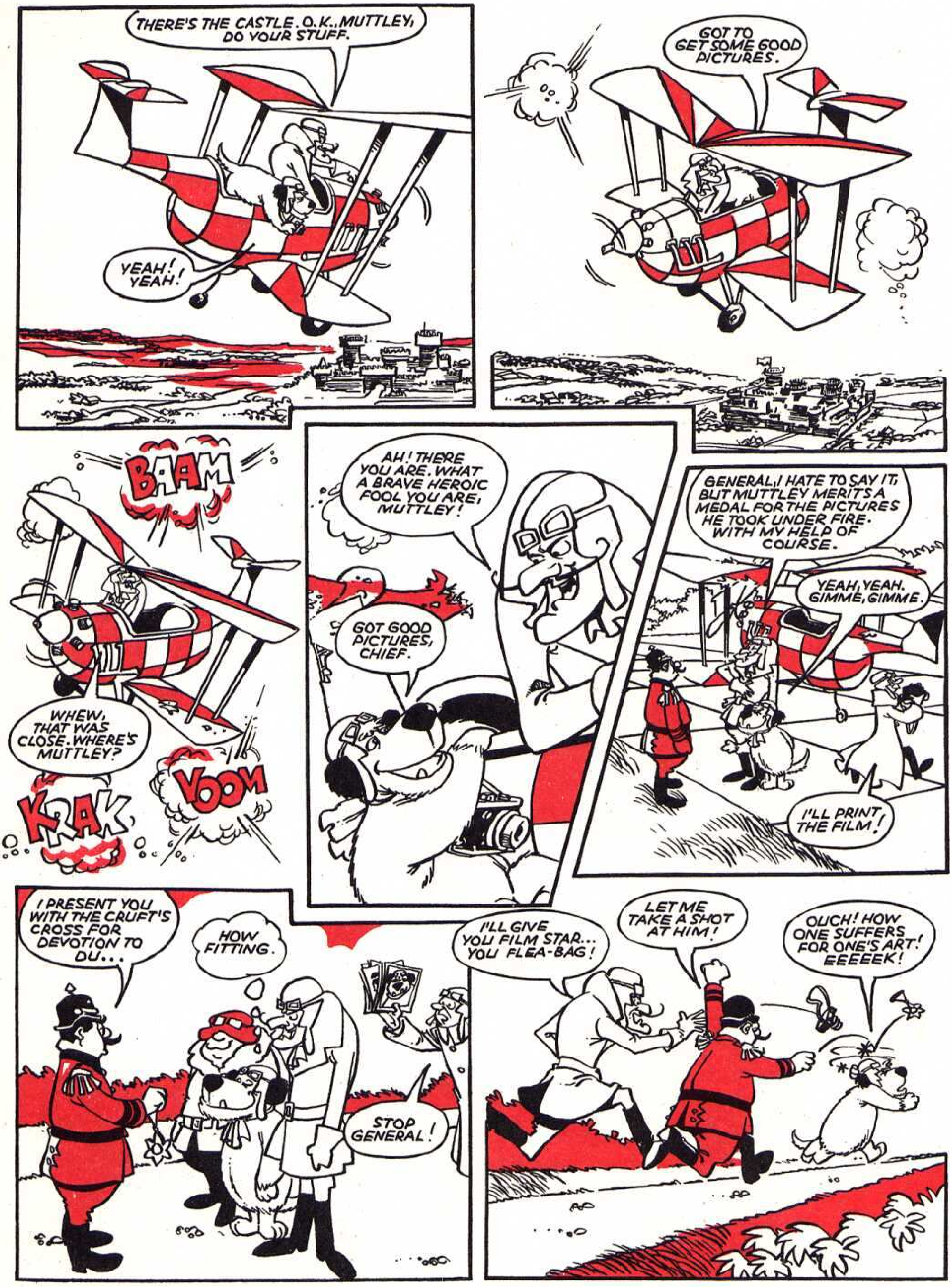
6 The days of the week derive their names from the planets of our Solar System. For example, the Sun and Sunday. What planets are connected with the other days?

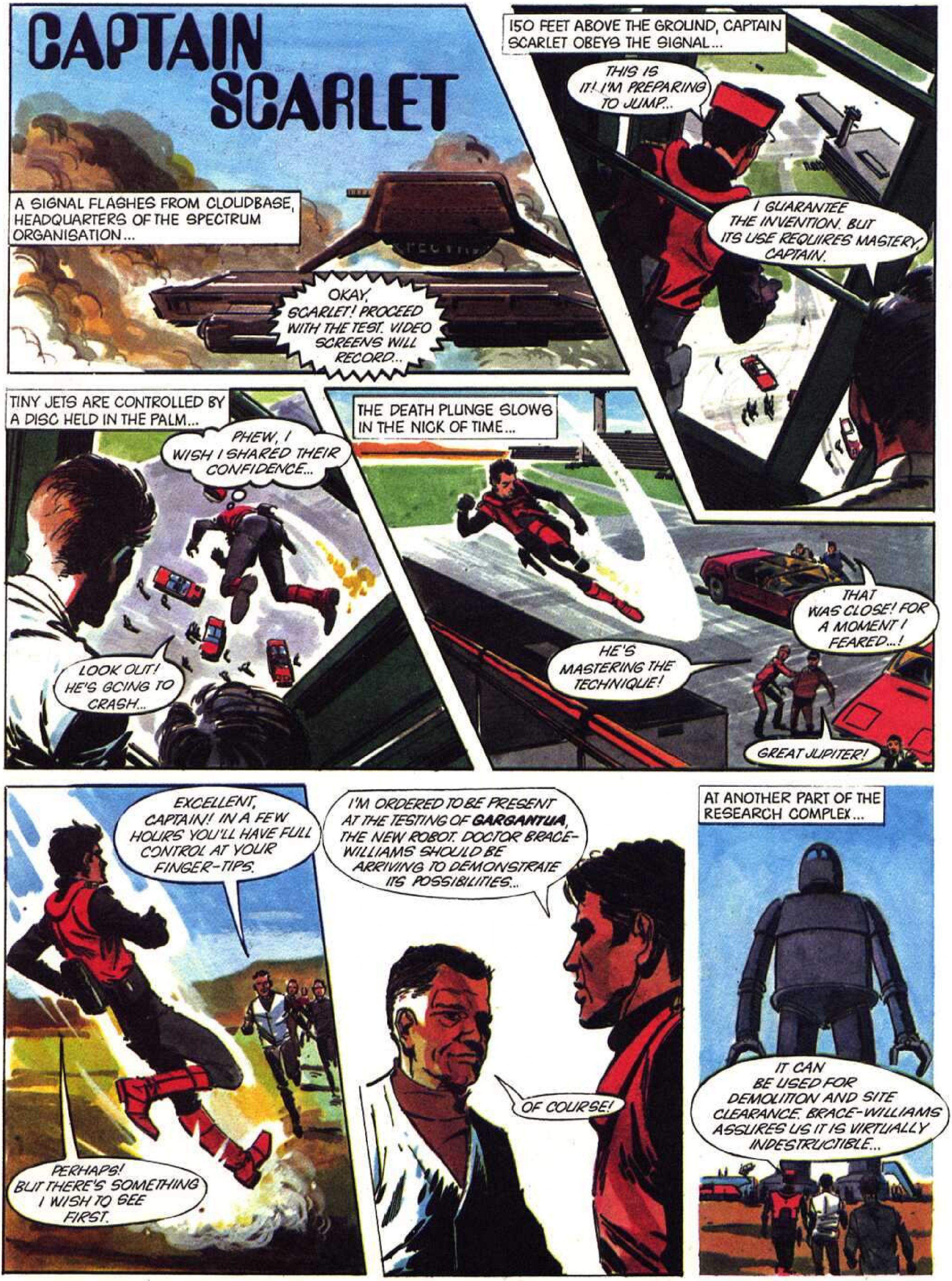
Answers on page 77

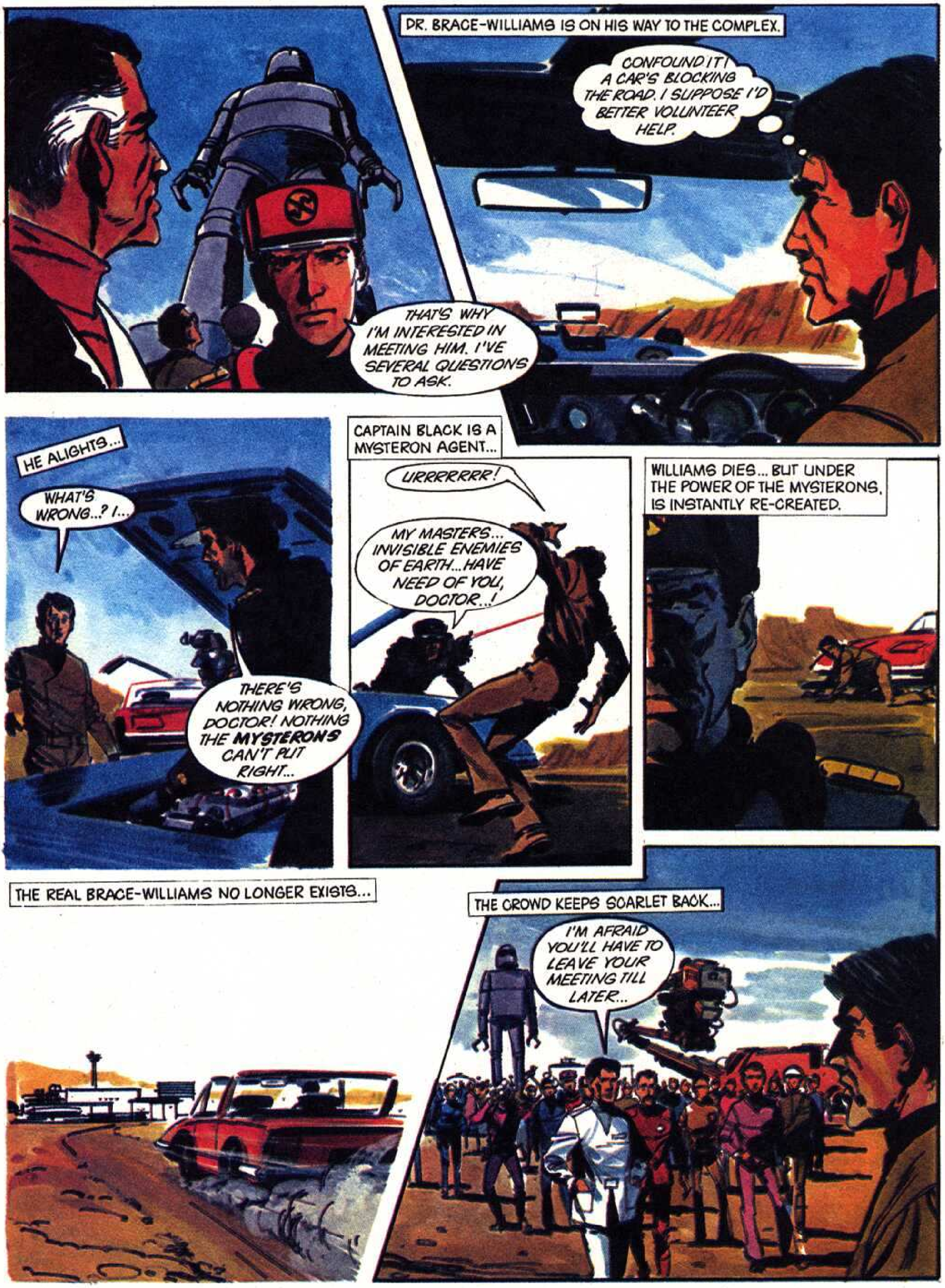


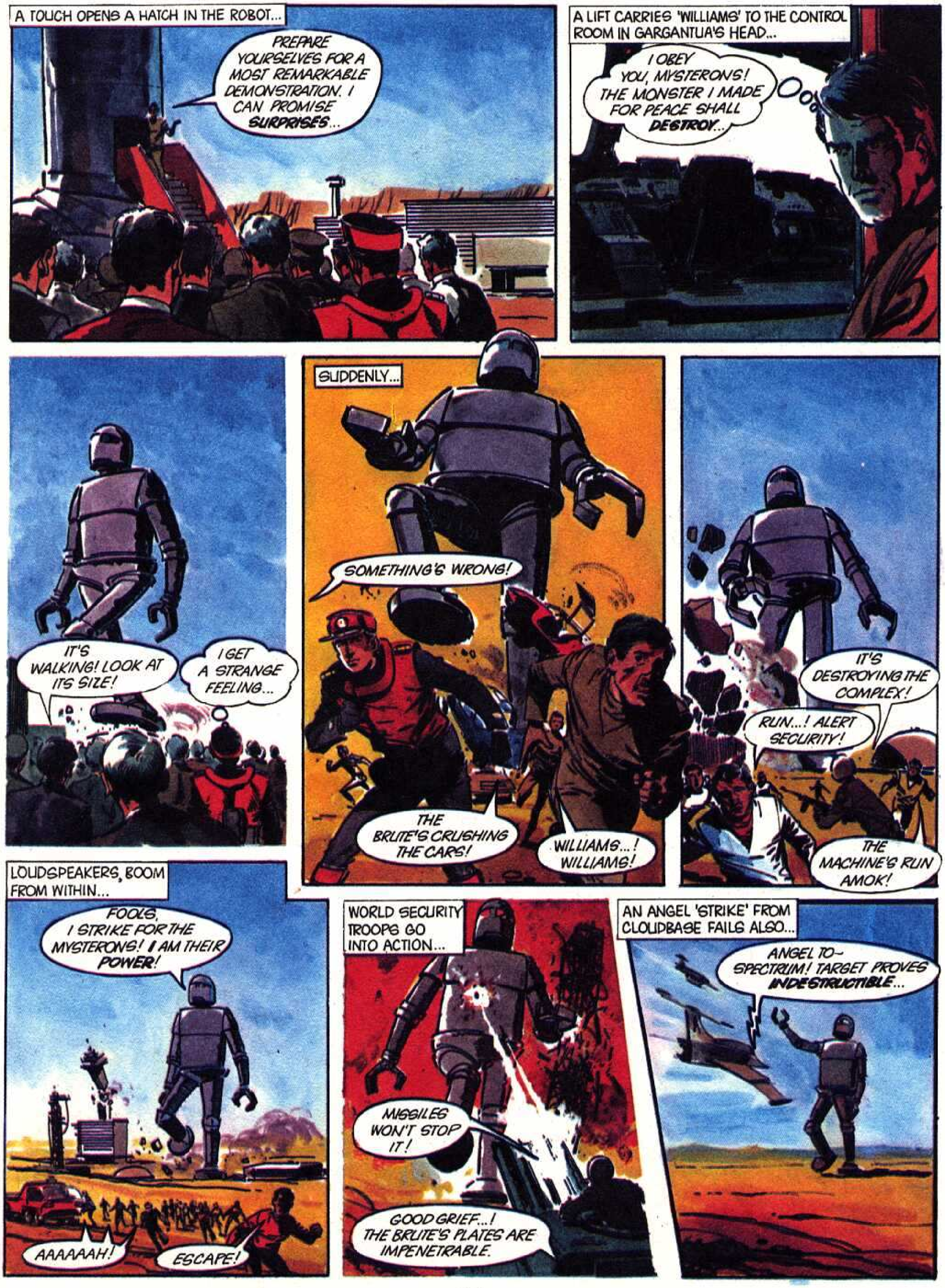
DASTARDLY AND MUTTLEY

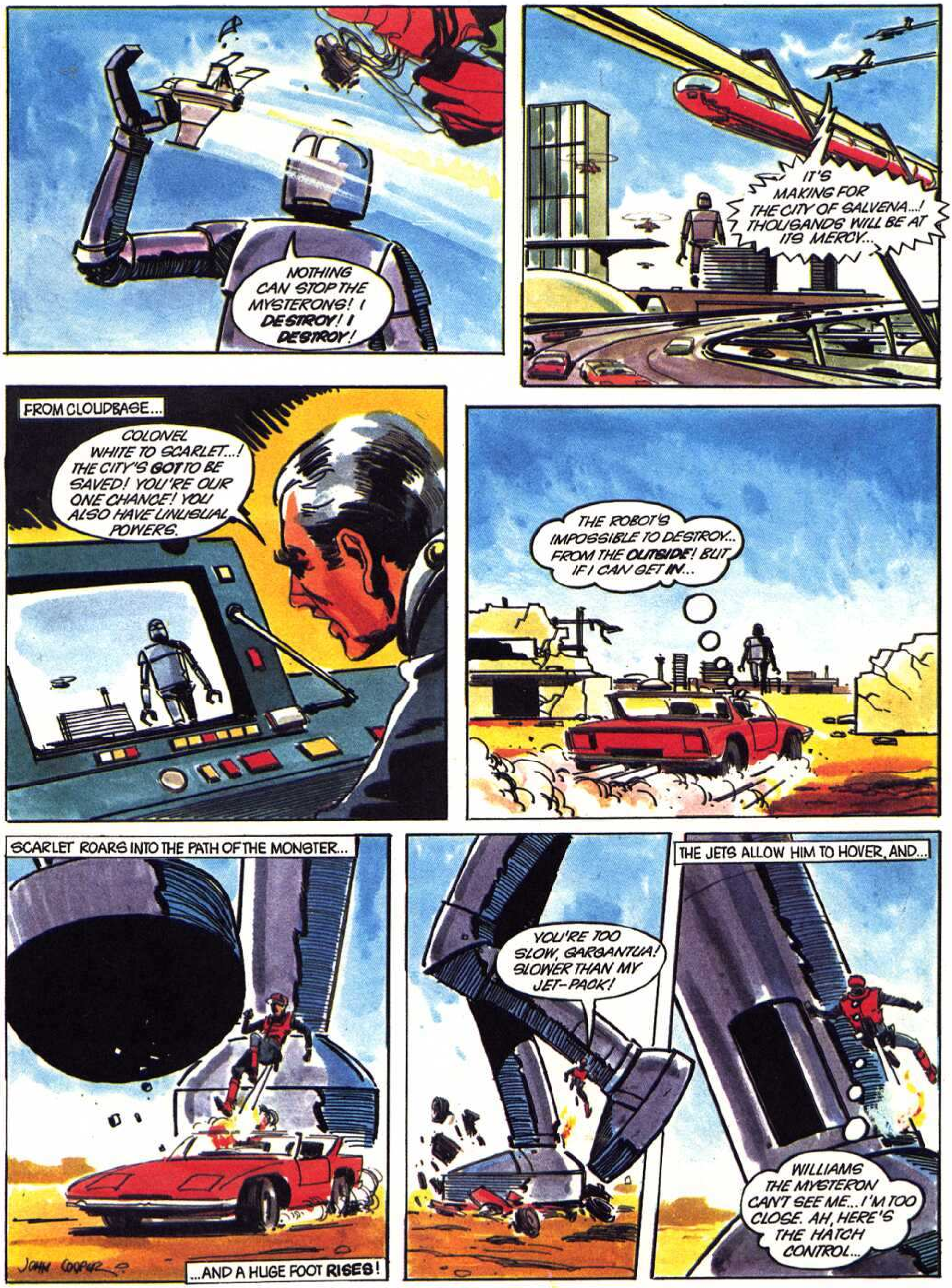

BRAVO! CHEER! WHAT A DOG. HUSKY'S THE REAL STAR OF THE FILM.
HUH! THE GREAT HAIRY SHOWOFF! GRRR. SNARL!
THAT SURE IS SOME DOG. YOU CAN SEE WHY HE'S A STAR.
MUTTLEY DOESN'T TAKE TOO KINDLY TO THE GENERAL'S VIEW . . .
. . . ALL RIGHT! I'LL TELL YOU HOW TO BECOME A FILM STAR. YOU FIRST SEND THE STUDIO YOUR PICTURE, AND THEN...
. . . I'LL BE A FILM STAR!
THE GENERAL WANTS TO SEE YOU TWO RIGHT AWAY.
THE ENEMY HAVE BUILT A NEW CASTLE. I WANT YOU TWO TO PHOTOGRAPH IT.
. . . I'LL CHANGE MY NAME TO ROCK... NO!... MARLON . . . MARLON MUTTLEY!
KLUNK HAS LENT YOU HIS SPECIAL ZOOM ZOOM SPECIAL.
GIMME... GIMME...
DO A GOOD JOB AND THE GENERAL PROMISED A MEDAL.
HE DOESN'T WANT A MEDAL, HE JUST WANTS TO BE A FILM STAR. THE CANINE CLOT!
. . . HUMM... A FILM STAR WITH A MEDAL...

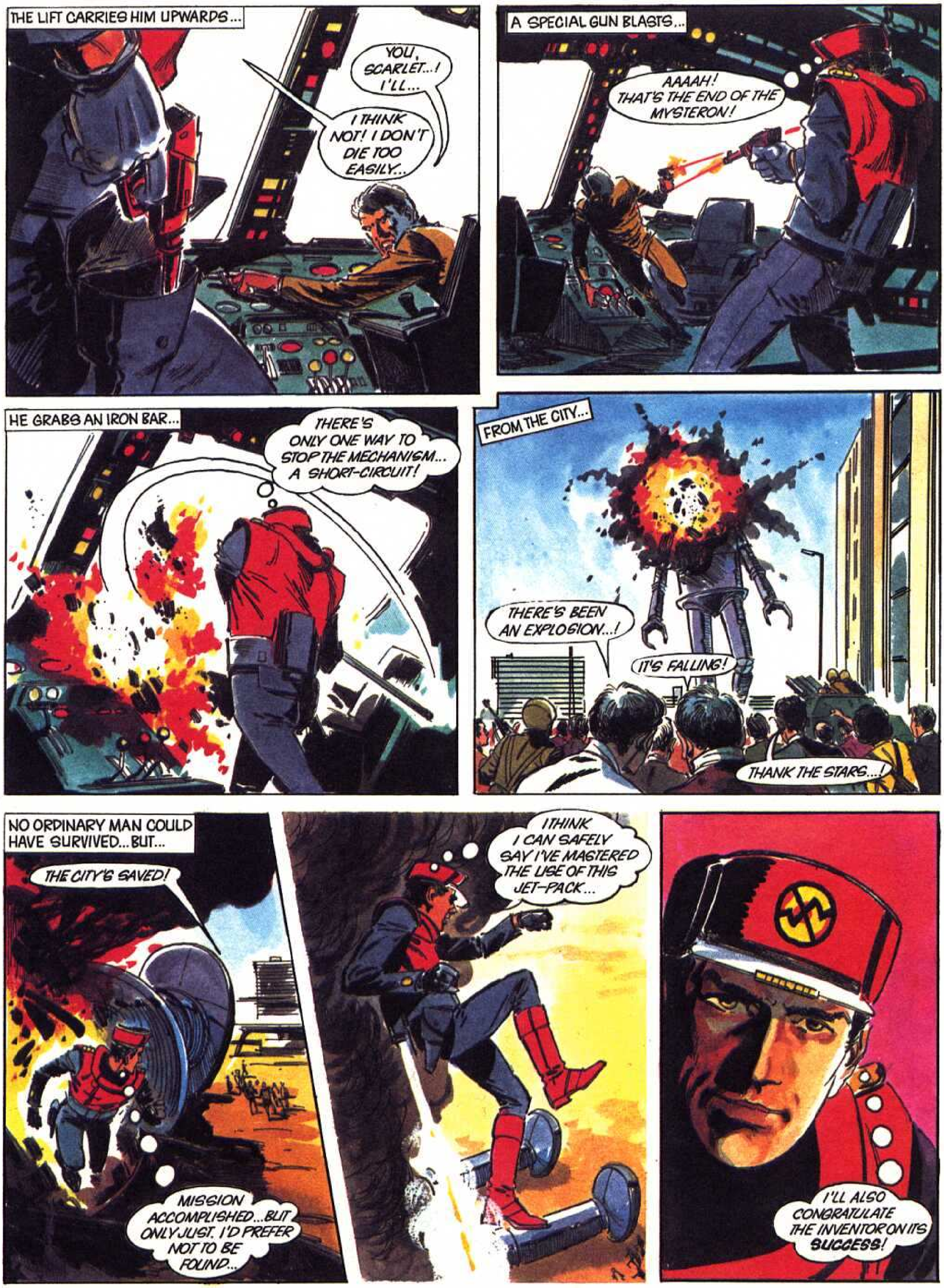

THERE'S THE CASTLE. O.K., MUTTLEY, DO YOUR STUFF.
YEAH! YEAH!
GOT TO GET SOME GOOD PICTURES.
BAAM
WHEW, THAT WAS CLOSE. WHERE'S MUTTLEY?
KRAK
VOOM
AH! THERE YOU ARE. WHAT A BRAVE HEROIC FOOL YOU ARE, MUTTLEY!
GOT GOOD PICTURES, CHIEF.
GENERAL, I HATE TO SAY IT, BUT MUTTLEY MERITS A MEDAL FOR THE PICTURES HE TOOK UNDER FIRE. WITH MY HELP OF COURSE.
YEAH, YEAH. GIMME, GIMME.
I'LL PRINT THE FILM!
I PRESENT YOU WITH THE CRUFT'S CROSS FOR DEVOTION TO DU...
HOW FITTING.
STOP GENERAL!
I'LL GIVE YOU FILM STAR... YOU FLEA-BAG!
LET ME TAKE A SHOT AT HIM!
OUCH! HOW ONE SUFFERS FOR ONE'S ART! EEEEEK!


CAPTAIN SCARLET
A SIGNAL FLASHES FROM CLOUDBASE, HEADQUARTERS OF THE SPECTRUM ORGANISATION...
OKAY, SCARLET! PROCEED WITH THE TEST. VIDEO SCREENS WILL RECORD...
150 FEET ABOVE THE GROUND, CAPTAIN SCARLET OBEYS THE SIGNAL...
THIS IS IT! I'M PREPARING TO JUMP...
I GUARANTEE THE INVENTION. BUT ITS USE REQUIRES MASTERY, CAPTAIN.
TINY JETS ARE CONTROLLED BY A DISC HELD IN THE PALM...
PHEW, I WISH I SHARED THEIR CONFIDENCE...
LOOK OUT! HE'S GOING TO CRASH...
THE DEATH PLUNGE SLOWS IN THE NICK OF TIME...
HE'S MASTERING THE TECHNIQUE!
THAT WAS CLOSE! FOR A MOMENT I FEARED...!
GREAT JUPITER!
EXCELLENT, CAPTAIN! IN A FEW HOURS YOU'LL HAVE FULL CONTROL AT YOUR FINGER-TIPS.
PERHAPS! BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I WISH TO SEE FIRST.
I'M ORDERED TO BE PRESENT AT THE TESTING OF GARGANTUA, THE NEW ROBOT. DOCTOR BRACE-WILLIAMS SHOULD BE ARRIVING TO DEMONSTRATE ITS POSSIBILITIES...
OF COURSE!
AT ANOTHER PART OF THE RESEARCH COMPLEX...
IT CAN BE USED FOR DEMOLITION AND SITE CLEARANCE. BRACE-WILLIAMS ASSURES US IT IS VIRTUALLY INDESTRUCTIBLE...


THAT'S WHY I'M INTERESTED IN MEETING HIM. I'VE SEVERAL QUESTIONS TO ASK.
DR. BRACE-WILLIAMS IS ON HIS WAY TO THE COMPLEX.
CONFOUND IT! A CAR'S BLOCKING THE ROAD. I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER VOLUNTEER HELP.
HE ALIGHTS...
WHAT'S WRONG...? I...
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG, DOCTOR! NOTHING THE MYSTERONS CAN'T PUT RIGHT...
CAPTAIN BLACK IS A MYSTERON AGENT...
URRRRRRR!
MY MASTERS... INVISIBLE ENEMIES OF EARTH... HAVE NEED OF YOU, DOCTOR...!
WILLIAMS DIES... BUT UNDER THE POWER OF THE MYSTERONS, IS INSTANTLY RE-CREATED.
THE REAL BRACE-WILLIAMS NO LONGER EXISTS...
THE CROWD KEEPS SCARLET BACK...
I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE YOUR MEETING TILL LATER...

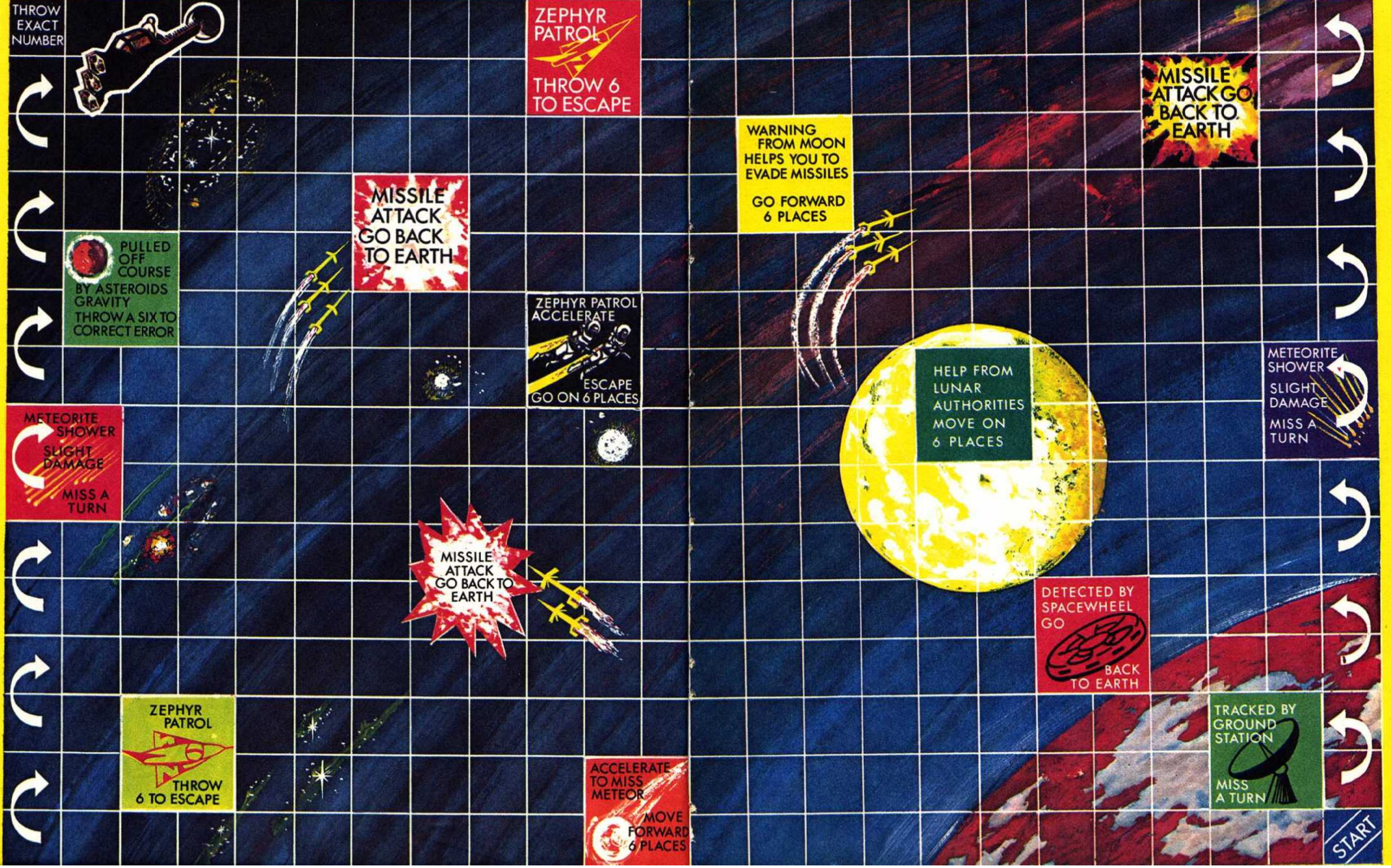

A TOUCH OPENS A HATCH IN THE ROBOT...
PREPARE YOURSELVES FOR A MOST REMARKABLE DEMONSTRATION. I CAN PROMISE **SURPRISES**...
A LIFT CARRIES 'WILLIAMS' TO THE CONTROL ROOM IN GARGANTUA'S HEAD...
I OBEY YOU, MYSTERONS! THE MONSTER I MADE FOR PEACE SHALL **DESTROY**...
IT'S WALKING! LOOK AT ITS SIZE!
I GET A STRANGE FEELING...
SUDDENLY...
SOMETHING'S WRONG!
THE BRUTE'S CRUSHING THE CARS!
WILLIAMS...! WILLIAMS!
IT'S DESTROYING THE COMPLEX!
RUN...! ALERT SECURITY!
THE MACHINE'S RUN AMOK!
LOUDSPEAKERS BOOM FROM WITHIN...
FOOLS, I STRIKE FOR THE MYSTERONS! I AM THEIR **POWER**!
AAAAAAH!
ESCAPE!
WORLD SECURITY TROOPS GO INTO ACTION...
MISSILES WON'T STOP IT!
GOOD GRIEF...! THE BRUTE'S PLATES ARE IMPENETRABLE.
AN ANGEL 'STRIKE' FROM CLOUDBASE FAILS ALSO...
ANGEL TO SPECTRUM! TARGET PROVES **INDESTRUCTIBLE**...

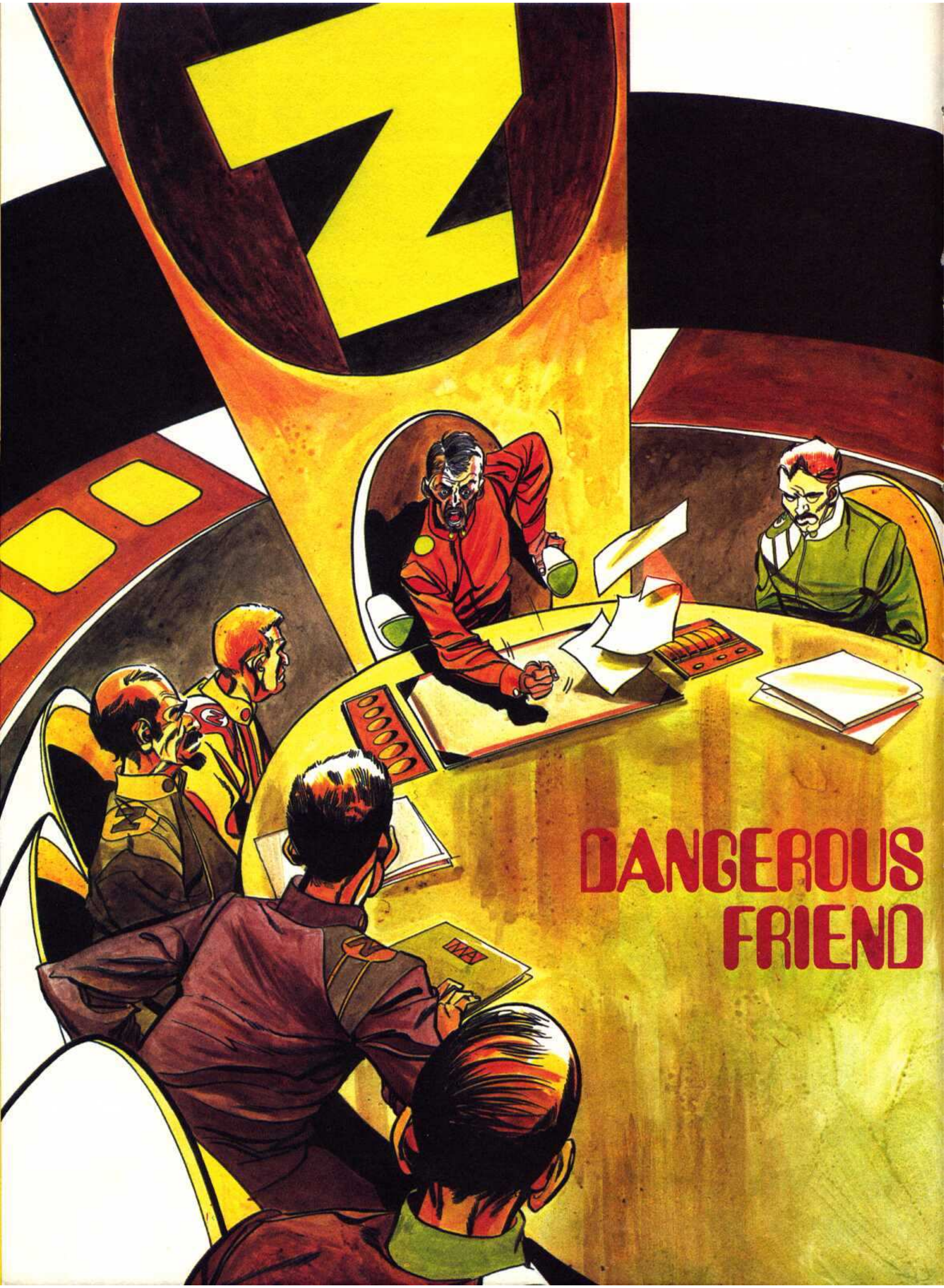

NOTHING CAN STOP THE MYSTERONS! I DESTROY! I DESTROY!
IT'S MAKING FOR THE CITY OF SALVENA...! THOUSANDS WILL BE AT ITS MERCY...
FROM CLOUDBASE...
COLONEL WHITE TO SCARLET...! THE CITY'S GOT TO BE SAVED! YOU'RE OUR ONE CHANCE! YOU ALSO HAVE UNUSUAL POWERS.
THE ROBOT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO DESTROY... FROM THE OUTSIDE! BUT IF I CAN GET IN...
SCARLET ROARS INTO THE PATH OF THE MONSTER...
JOHN COOPER
...AND A HUGE FOOT RISES!
YOU'RE TOO SLOW, GARGANTUA! SLOWER THAN MY JET-PACK!
THE JETS ALLOW HIM TO HOVER, AND...
WILLIAMS THE MYSTERON CAN'T SEE ME... I'M TOO CLOSE. AH, HERE'S THE HATCH CONTROL...


THE LIFT CARRIES HIM UPWARDS...
YOU, SCARLET...! I'LL...
I THINK NOT! I DON'T DIE TOO EASILY...
A SPECIAL GUN BLASTS...
AAAAH! THAT'S THE END OF THE MYSTERON!
HE GRABS AN IRON BAR...
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP THE MECHANISM... A SHORT-CIRCUIT!
FROM THE CITY...
THERE'S BEEN AN EXPLOSION...!
IT'S FALLING!
THANK THE STARS...!
NO ORDINARY MAN COULD HAVE SURVIVED... BUT...
THE CITY'S SAVED!
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED... BUT ONLY JUST. I'D PREFER NOT TO BE FOUND...
I THINK I CAN SAFELY SAY I'VE MASTERED THE USE OF THIS JET-PACK...
I'LL ALSO CONGRATULATE THE INVENTOR ON ITS SUCCESS!

COUNTDOWN RESCUE MISSION

Rules: A game for up to 4 players. The first player to get a vital message from Earth to Commander Marco Zero on Countdown is the winner. All you need is a counter for each player and a dice. Throw a six for lift off.


THROW EXACT NUMBER
ZEPHYR PATROL THROW 6 TO ESCAPE
MISSILE ATTACK GO BACK TO EARTH
WARNING FROM MOON HELPS YOU TO EVADE MISSILES GO FORWARD 6 PLACES
MISSILE ATTACK GO BACK TO EARTH
PULLED OFF COURSE BY ASTEROIDS GRAVITY THROW A SIX TO CORRECT ERROR
ZEPHYR PATROL ACCELERATE ESCAPE GO ON 6 PLACES
HELP FROM LUNAR AUTHORITIES MOVE ON 6 PLACES
METEORITE SHOWER SLIGHT DAMAGE MISS A TURN
METEORITE SHOWER SLIGHT DAMAGE MISS A TURN
MISSILE ATTACK GO BACK TO EARTH
DETECTED BY SPACEWHEEL GO BACK TO EARTH
ZEPHYR PATROL THROW 6 TO ESCAPE
ACCELERATE TO MISS METEOR MOVE FORWARD 6 PLACES
TRACKED BY GROUND STATION MISS A TURN
START



DANGEROUS FRIEND

Costra's fist crashed against the laminated surface of the heavy table so violently that those seated around its oval circumference must have wondered whether the reverberations would ever stop. Every hard face, although impassive to their leader, showed flashes of fear. The executive committee of the 'Company' were in session. Twenty men faced the contorted face of the most powerful man on Earth, William Johannes Costra.

"The Moon is ours," screamed the near-demented Earth Controller. "The Moon is ours and yet for seven months we allow Bellingham's insurrectionists to thwart our authority!"

He rose from the table, turning to look out of the window onto the Washington skyline. For several minutes he didn't speak. Those behind him sat like living dead. At last Costra spoke again.

"I want results, gentlemen. I want the Moon. If I don't get it, take the undisputed word of William Costra, heads will roll!"

Costra picked up his papers and marched away from the table. Immediately the entire committee rose to a man, held to attention until the lean balding figure had disappeared through the distant door.

No sooner had the electronic hum of the door mechanism subsided than the hubbub broke loose. For several seconds the room was a mass of almost incomprehensible sound as one after the other argued and contradicted, attempting to absolve themselves from the ruinous missions which had so vexed the Earth Controller.

Two sharp knocks on the table, and the gabble slowly died away. Colonel Nife, controller of the dreaded Zephyrmen, faced his bickering colleagues. The pale china-blue eyes scanned each face turned towards him.

"If the post-mortem is at an end, I suggest we unite our efforts toward following the Controller's orders." Nife's voice was a dreary monotone, but those in the room knew it belied all the craft and cunning of an unscrupulous mind. Next to Costra, Colonel Nife was the most feared man on Earth.

"The way to bring these rebels to their senses is to present them with a gift." Nife gazed slowly around the puzzled faces, satisfied that his remark had caused the intended mystery.

It was two days later, some two hundred and forty thousand miles above Earth's surface, where the Moon shines dazzling white in a cat black sky, that the detection was made of a tiny, almost imperceptible dot penetrating the swirling mists of Earth and heading out towards them. Down on the lunar surface, spears of blinding sunlight reflected from the purplish dome that canopied Sabine, the lunar capital.

At the FLP control and tracking centre a report was made.

"I have a track on 059 Zero Blue," repeated the operator to the senior officer.

"What's the range?" came the calm reply.

"152,000 kilometres."

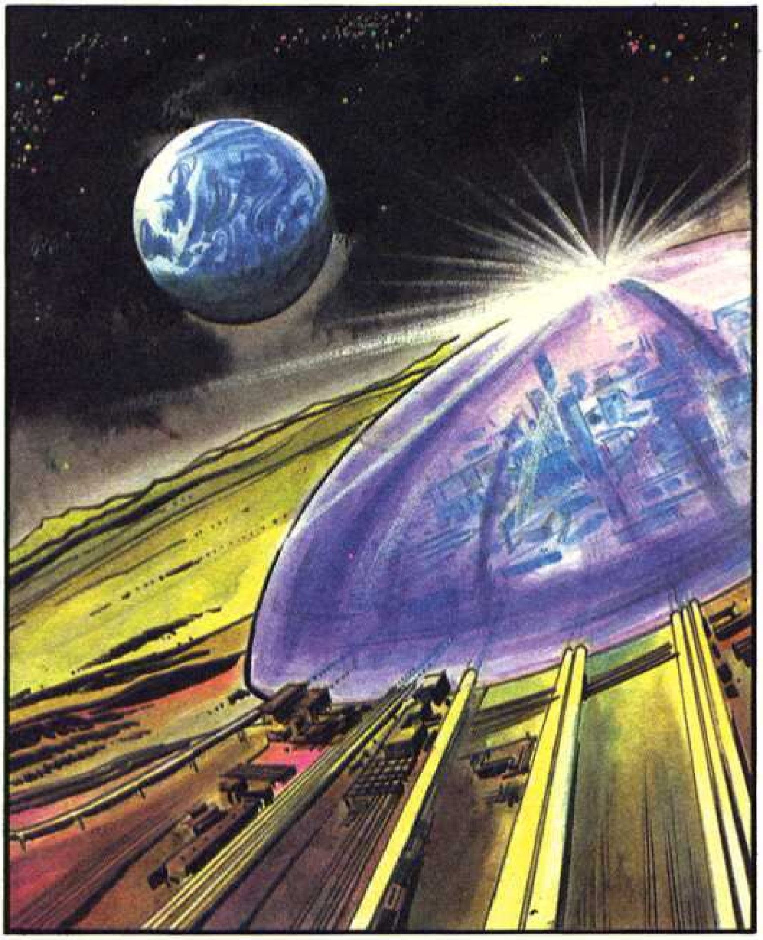
It was a good twenty minutes after the first report that the second was made.

"That's odd, sir," Operator Jordan reported, his eyes still glued to the scanner before him. "He's taking a cock-eyed course for a small kite."

"Where did he come from?" asked Commander Sorensen.

"Could've been from their military satellite on the reverse side, it definitely wasn't from the spacewheel," came the answer.

"How far is he out now?" Steve Sorensen waited while the young operator typed in the necessary equation on an adjacent keyboard.



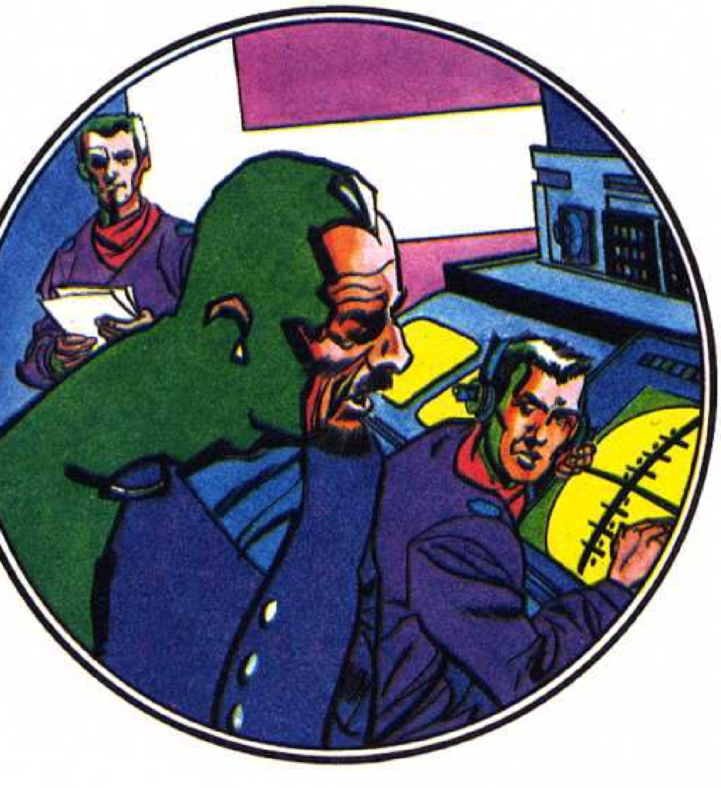
"112,710 point 6 kilometres exactly, Commander," read out the youngster, handing over the tape that he'd torn from the computer.

"Mmm . . ." mused Sorensen. "What's our evil little friend Costra up to now? You're sure it's not a missile, Jordan?"

"I know I've only six months' experience, Commander, but I couldn't make a greenhorn mistake like that."

Sorensen detected the sense of injury in the younger man's voice. He patted his shoulder reassuringly as the boy expertly manipulated his controls to lock on to a visual. Seconds later the bigger of his two scanners ceased flickering to focus on the miniature needle that both men recognised as an approaching spacecraft.

"That's a Zephyr Beetle Mark 5 or I'm a blue-ear Martian," whistled the operator. "I didn't think their range exceeded 150,000 kilometres. So what in the name of exploding meteorites is it doing heading away from Earth? It couldn't be coming to us, could it, sir?" The boy stopped, not waiting for an answer and flicked another switch which brought the beautiful blue and white curve of Earth into view. Three small white lines etched their way from the planet and arched out into space.



"There's no doubt what they are," muttered the control commander picking up his hand mike.

"Sorensen to defence unit one. We have a track on 086 Zero Blue and a flight of missiles on 046 Zero Blue. Lock on and await further orders."

"Thank you, control," came the curt reply and communication was at an end.

Sorensen turned to the girl operator in the distant corner.

"See if any of the Countdown crew are available, we seem to have something out of the usual here."

The control room clock registered 22.10 lunar hours when the door hissed open and the burly figure of Grant Two stood framed in the doorway and behind him the bulbous-headed alien nick-named 'Bill'.

"What's the buzz, Steve?" Grant asked.

"We have a mystery craft. A small Zephyr Beetle blasted off about half-an-hour ago, now it has company. Three intermediate type C missiles. As I see it, it could be one of three things. Firstly, it could be some poor devil making an escape break and the missiles are intended to limit his freedom. Secondly, it could be some undesirable element, namely someone equally criminal to the Zephyrmen themselves. Thirdly, it could be Costra's latest little charade to get a foot on the Moon."

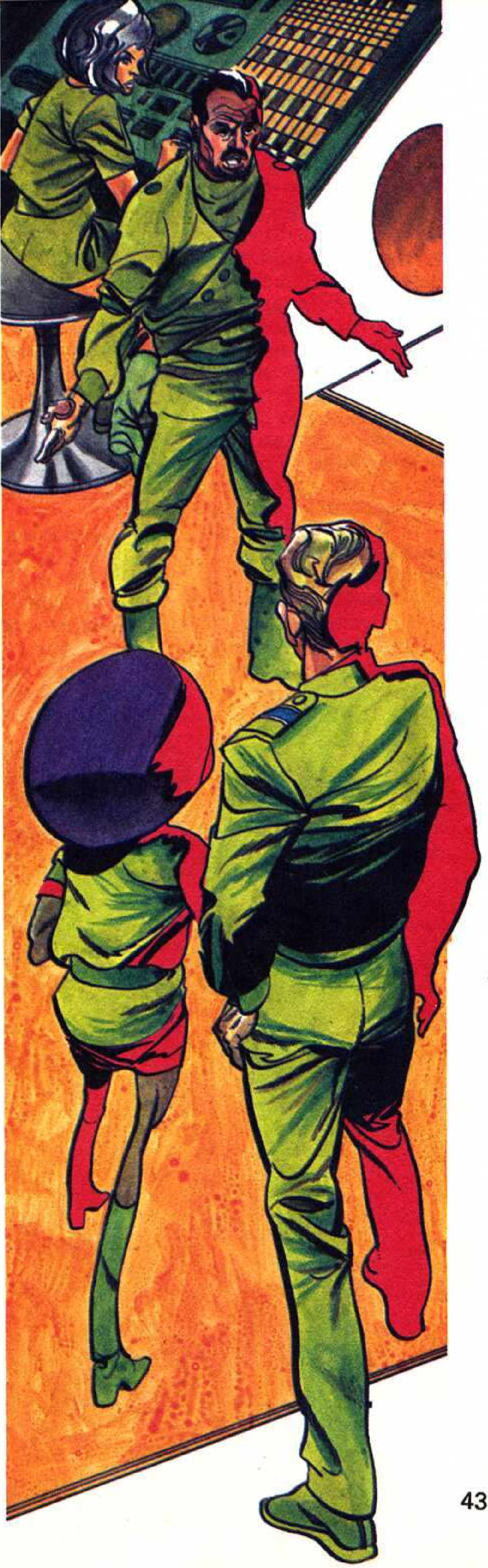
Sorensen frowned. "I wouldn't like to hazard a guess. All three suppositions are equal."

"So what course of action do you suggest, Commander?" The piping falsetto of Bill interrupted any further statement by Sorensen.

"We could terminate the missiles and capture the Zephyr Beetle. The only alternative is to allow the missiles to do their work," Sorensen said.

"And we're no better than Costra if we can stand idly by and take a chance that there isn't someone on that ship in bad, bad, trouble." Grant Two looked levelly into the Control Commander's eyes. Sorensen heaved a heavy sigh.

"You're dead right, Grant, but it's a devil of a temptation to let those missiles solve the problem for me." He turned and ordered the necessary numerical programme that would deal with the missiles. The occupants of the room stared up at the large console screen which was now operating and watched the three missiles end their destructive life.



"Now let's see if we can get contact with that Zephyr Beetle," stated Sorensen, satisfied with the handiwork of his force field defence system.

The girl communications operator had gone nearly half-way through her microwave permutations before she turned her head and reported success.

"It's very weak, sir, only strength fifty-two."

"O.K., let's all hear it, broadcast it on open control and boost," ordered the Control Commander.

It took several seconds for the offending oscillations to clear and the tense voice to become audible.

"Doctor Mario Vallatti to Lunar Control . . . Doctor Mario Vallatti to Lunar Control . . . for mercy's sake can't someone hear me?"

"Vallatti? The Italian bio-chemist! It can't be!" Sorensen was so flabbergasted that for a moment he could only turn and stare open-mouthed at Grant and Bill.

"I can only assume in ignorance that this is a name of some significance," Bill's sing-song voice broke in.

"That is the understatement of the year," replied the young tracking operator. "Why, back on Earth he's a legend, sir. Vallatti's won the Nobel prize more times than I can remember. Not only that, he was Costra's number one critic before the Company's takeover, and after. No wonder they sent three missiles to destroy his ship."

Jordan finished as the open relay crackled and Dr. Vallatti repeated his desperate message, the voice coming through more strongly this time. Sorensen needed no spur. He grabbed his hand mike and barked into the mouthpiece.

"This is Lunar Control. We're receiving you loud and clear, Dr. Vallatti. State your support situation and personal condition!"

"Thank heaven, I thought you'd never hear me." The occupants of Control detected the relief and emotion in the old man's voice. "My fuel is almost nil, air doesn't seem too bad . . . at a guess I'd say my present course is disastrous," he continued.

"Don't worry, Doc, I'll send up a tug to collect you. It will take a little time to organise, but don't panic, help is on its way," Sorensen reassured the old scientist.

Grant and Bill walked towards the door as the Control Commander set about instituting the rescue operation.

"I think we'll thumb a lift on that tug," Grant called to Sorensen as the door automatically slid open in front of him.

"Be my guest!" called back Sorensen, not looking up.

Bill and Grant stood on the moving surface of the servo-walk. For a few minutes neither spoke, but just allowed themselves to be carried along with their own thoughts.

"You are not satisfied with the conclusion of this affair, are you, Grant?" Once again the little alien with his strange oversized head had anticipated the Earthman's anxieties. "It does not jell, does it? How it is that an ageing man is allowed to escape from the clutches of a very sophisticated security system," added Bill.

"That's about the gist of it," muttered Grant. "It has a nasty smell to it, and I wasn't going to get involved in any arguments with Steve Sorensen and his crew. They obviously think Mario Vallatti is some kind of a saint." The two figures stepped from the servo-walk and boarded the flip tube to the spaceport.

"So I figured the only way we could keep things under control is to be aboard this rescue tug," continued Grant, depressing the control that sent the flip cart jetting through the transparent tunnel towards the distant spaceport.

By the time the two Countdown crew members were lifted by the escalator into the tug's main cabin, the captain and his one-man crew were ready for immediate take-off.

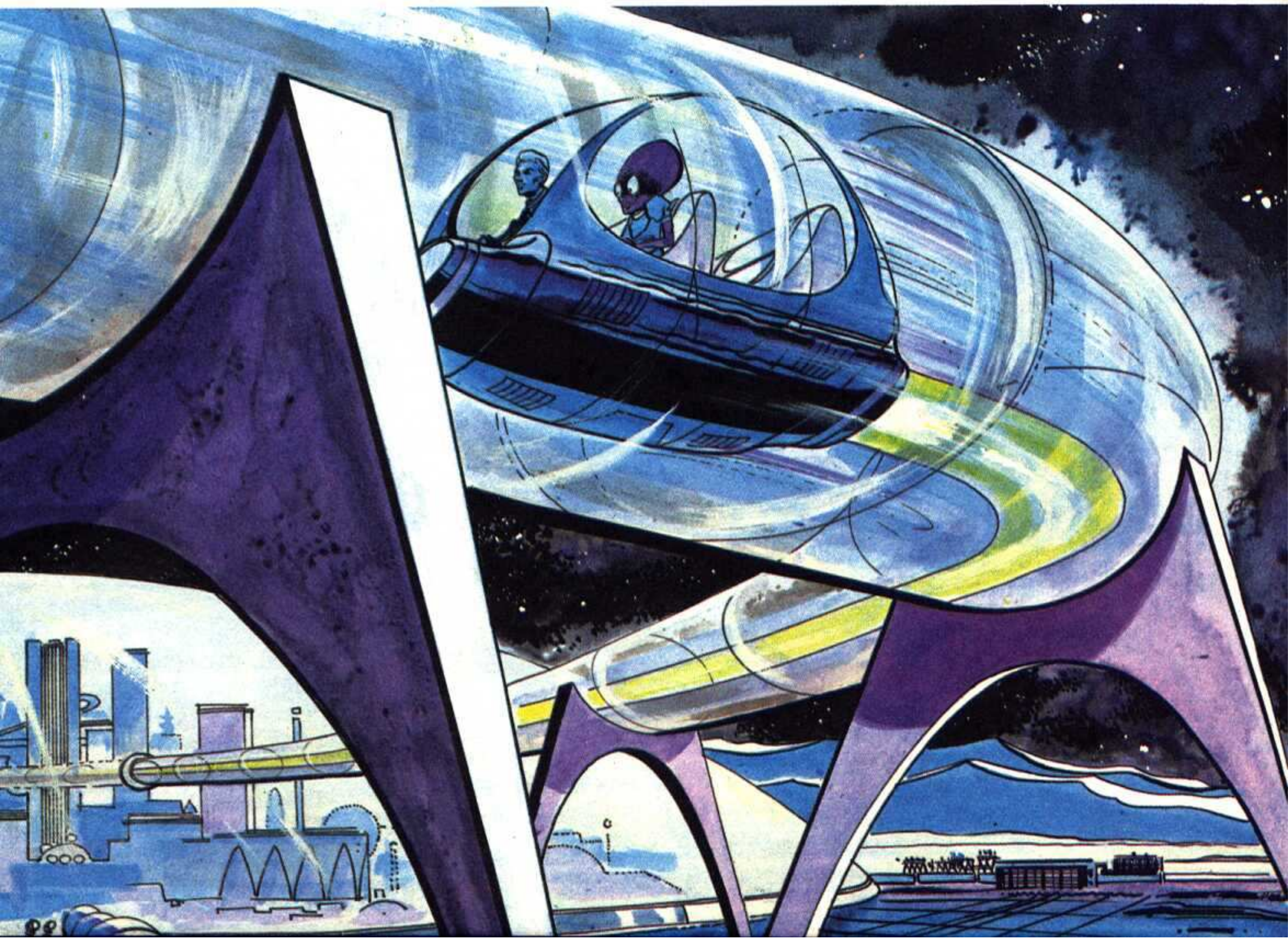
"Welcome aboard," said Captain Mellish, in deep Australian baritone, as they stepped from the cage.

"O.K, Swanee!" he called over to his huge West Indian mate. "Let's get to it." Swanee Mendoza flashed a wide toothy grin at his skipper and the tug's rocket motors boomed with full power.

"Is it really Doc Vallatti on this Zephyr Beetle?" asked Rod Mellish, the tone of his voice almost reverent.

"It would seem so," replied Grant. "Even so, Captain, I advise that you observe the full precautionary procedures."

"Yeah, yeah," replied the tug skipper, almost dismissing Grant's warning. "It sure is a miracle that the Doc slipped by Costra."



"Perhaps too much of a miracle," said Grant bitingly.

When the rendezvous was made some twenty-three minutes later, the Zephyr Beetle was pirouetting lazily in the star-studded sky. Soon after, a communication cable fizzed from the tug, its magnetic head thumping onto the side of the stricken craft.

"This is Captain Mellish of lunar tug thirty-two. Are you O.K., Doc? Don't worry about your video, just talk normally – we can hear anything that goes on in there." Mellish waited for a reply but nothing was forthcoming. "Check that cable, Swanee, we might have a break," he snapped at Lieutenant Mendoza.

"She's as right as rain, skipper," reported the engineer.

"It can't be," shouted Mellish, "there must be *some* noise coming from inside."

They all stood listening to a gentle purr that emanated from the receiver.

"What d'you make of that, Grant?" queried Mellish.

"Sounds like someone breathing to me," replied Grant.

"Me, too," rejoined Mellish. "The doc's in trouble, we'd better open up that old tin can right away. There's no time to lose."

"Hold on, Mellish," interrupted Grant. "Is the isolation unit ready?"

"Oh, come on, Grant, there's a guy over there who's done more for Earth than any man alive and you're suggesting we dump him in that isolation pad. Just let me do the necessary arrangements, will you? Let me do the worrying." Rod Mellish's voice was almost childish.

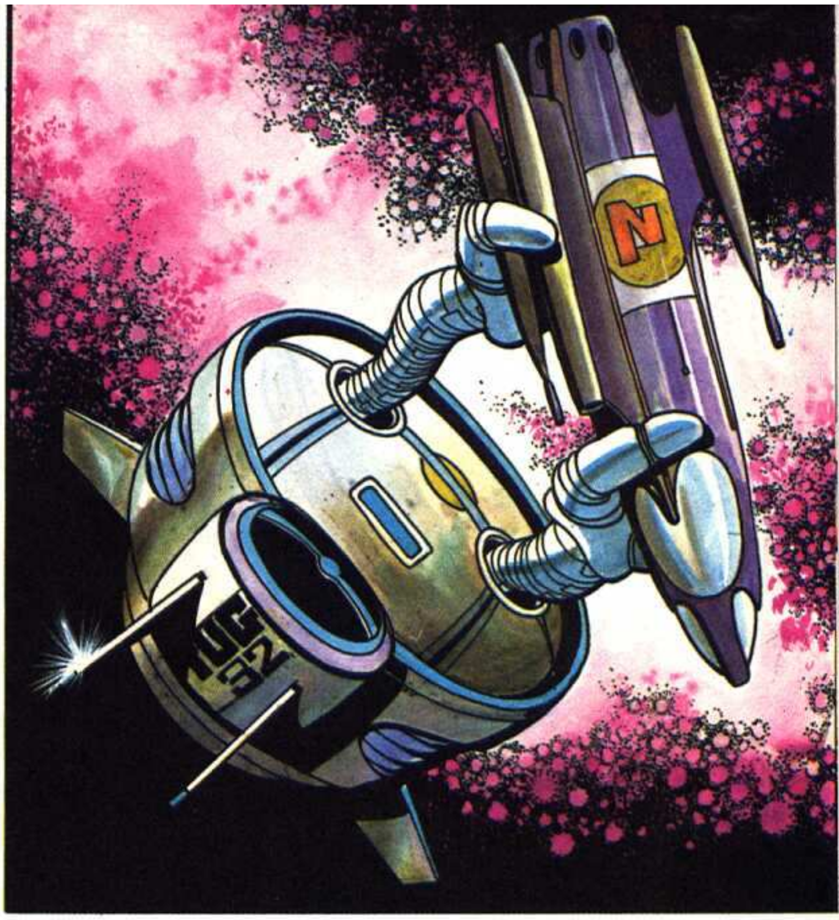
Bill and Grant watched from the observation port as the Zephyr Beetle was dragged in close by the long retractable arms of the tug. Nearer and nearer came the Beetle until a jarring shudder announced that the two craft had successfully docked.

"Good shooting, Swanee," the tug captain complimented his number two. "I'm going to bring Vallatti out. As soon as I'm back aboard, seal the hatch and jettison the Beetle."

"Right, chief," answered the giant West Indian.

On Earth the rescue operation had been followed carefully. Earth Controller Costra and Colonel Nife were watching events on the vast screen of the war room.

"How long will it take to be effective?" Costra directed his question to a small weaselly man, whose eyes swam behind



pebble-thick lenses. This was the medical controller Feodor Debrowski, architect of many an inhuman crime and at present awaiting the outcome of probably his most evil venture to date.

"Within seconds of physical contact with Vallatti," Debrowski answered silkily. "Vallatti will contaminate the entire population of Sabine," Colonel Nife interrupted.

"Our attack force should easily cope with any pockets of resistance," he told Costra.

"I congratulate you, Debrowski. You seem to have supplied the answer to a very vexing problem. As soon as the operation is complete I shall see that your efforts are generously rewarded." One corner of the Earth Controller's thin lips twisted upward. Those present immediately interpreted this as the nearest thing their leader could produce to a smile.

"It is honour enough to be able to assist your great person and make my humble contribution to the good of the company." Debrowski's flattery made even Nife cringe inwardly, but he knew from the expression on Costra's face that it was well received.

One thing was beginning to bother the Zephyrman Controller. The two space vehicles on the screen had been locked together for over ten minutes and their whole scheme depended on the tug returning to Sabine promptly. If there wasn't some action soon the Earth Controller would become restless. Colonel Nife could see from the beads of perspiration on Debrowski's large forehead that he was not alone in this anxiety.

Anxiety was also being felt in the space tug. Rod Mellish had been inside the Zephyr Beetle for more than nine minutes. After a short report on finding Dr. Vallatti unconscious he had stated his intention of bringing the old man back. Then nothing. Each man in turn had attempted to communicate with Mellish.

"It's no good," said Grant. "Something's happened to him in there. We don't have much alternative, Mr. Mendoza, one of us has to follow and with all respect to you, I think it had better be me."

"As number two officer, I reckon that's my job, Grant," Mendoza replied stubbornly.

"I don't think Control Commander Sorensen would agree," argued Grant. "Let him be judge." But Mendoza was already on his way through the hatch.

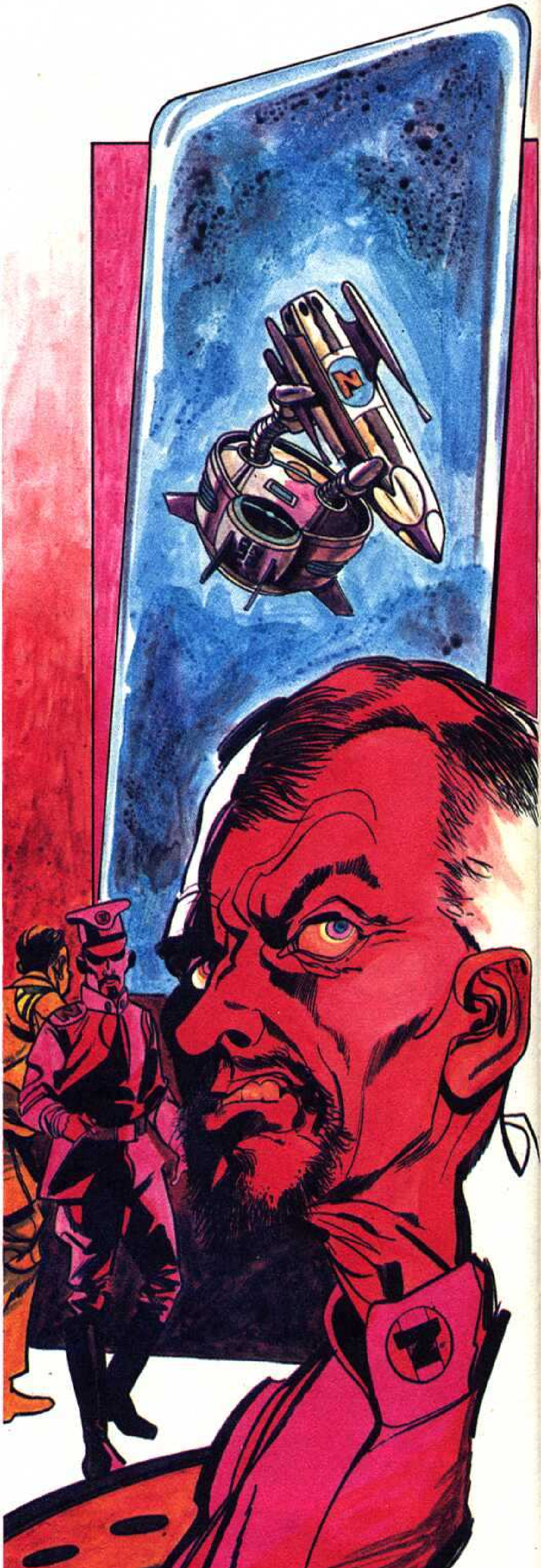
"Rod Mellish is my friend, if he's in trouble Swanee Mendoza isn't going to chicken-out on him," came the muffled response.

Minutes later the whole previous episode had been repeated, but this time Lunar Control had been put in the picture. Bill listened to the strained conversation between Grant and Sorensen. The two Earthmen were lost for a sensible answer to the problem. At last Bill spoke.

"Please argue no further," he almost sang in his peculiar treble. "There is only one positive answer to this problem and the men in the Zephyr Beetle probably need help desperately. Therefore, I myself am the most suitable person to engage in an investigation of this mystery. If Earth has evolved some new biological or chemical trap, as an alien it is likely to affect me least."

Bill's logic was indisputable. As on so many previous occasions his gentle patient intelligence met no contradiction.

Back in the War Room the unbearable tension was enhanced by Costra's pacing steps. Those assembled had watched his restless impatience increase from the familiar black scowl to the more menacing habit of an animal pacing an invisible cage. It was an eerie atmosphere indeed, with the one moving figure and his frozen entourage, every man's eyes glued hypnotically to the vast screen. At last Costra spoke.



"It would seem that you made an error in your calculations, Debrowski." His tone was cold and threatening.

"But it is not possible, Controller. The acid was fully tested." The sweating Debrowski grabbed a sheaf of papers and began to read.

"Vallatti was given a 5mg. dose, that is twice the necessary strength. After twenty minutes anyone touching his skin would be rendered unconscious immediately. Not only that, the very act of his breathing would contaminate the atmosphere to the same effect. After twenty-four hours those affected would recover. My findings were well tested and conclusive, Controller," pleaded the desperate Debrowski.

"I hope so for your sake!" Costra didn't have time to add to his threat. A sudden shout and he turned just in time to see the two spaceships part.

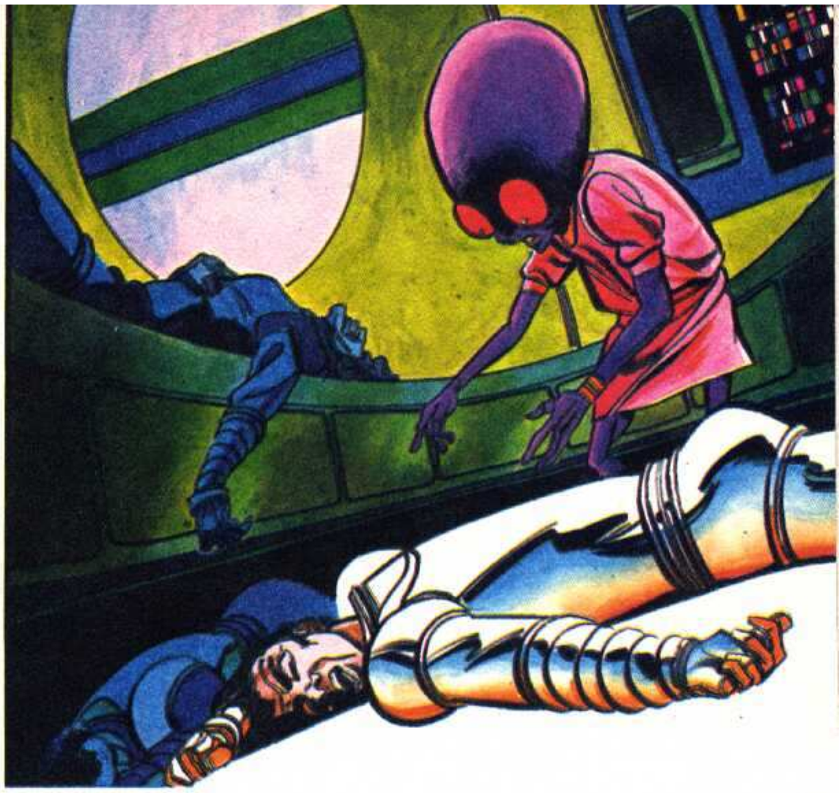
Debrowski almost sagged with relief.

"It seems I was, perhaps, hasty," Costra said grudgingly. "Inform the Invasion Controller, revise time factors. The rest of the attack as planned!" he shouted.

When Bill had entered the murky interior of the small transport he found the three men lying on the cabin floor together. His attempts to revive Mellish and Mendoza had failed. It was a little time after when he was concentrating his attention on Vallatti that he experienced a certain fuzziness in his own mental faculties.

Unlike his less-sophisticated human comrades, the little alien had built-in defences against such attack on his nervous system. By sitting motionless for a few seconds he increased the flow of certain chemicals into the bloodstream of his fantastic biological construction. Satisfied that the correct adjustment had been made to thwart whatever was invisibly attacking his nervous system, Bill checked the oxygen supply, which he considered ample for everyone, then went back to the ageing scientist.

Like some ancient medieval magician he placed his stubby purple fingers on Vallatti's forehead. Another of the alien's amazing gifts was in progress. The old man's experiences were being played back to Bill as if he were a tape-recorder. Even more unbelievable, Bill could extract from Vallatti's sub-conscious, events which had happened around Vallatti during his anaesthetised state. In minutes Debrowski's plot had been exposed.



When the first tracks appeared the Lunar defences were at full alert. Wave after wave of missiles exploded harmlessly against the force field arc. Sorensen and Grant watched with satisfaction as the following manned craft turned and headed back into the kaleidoscopic swirl of Earth.

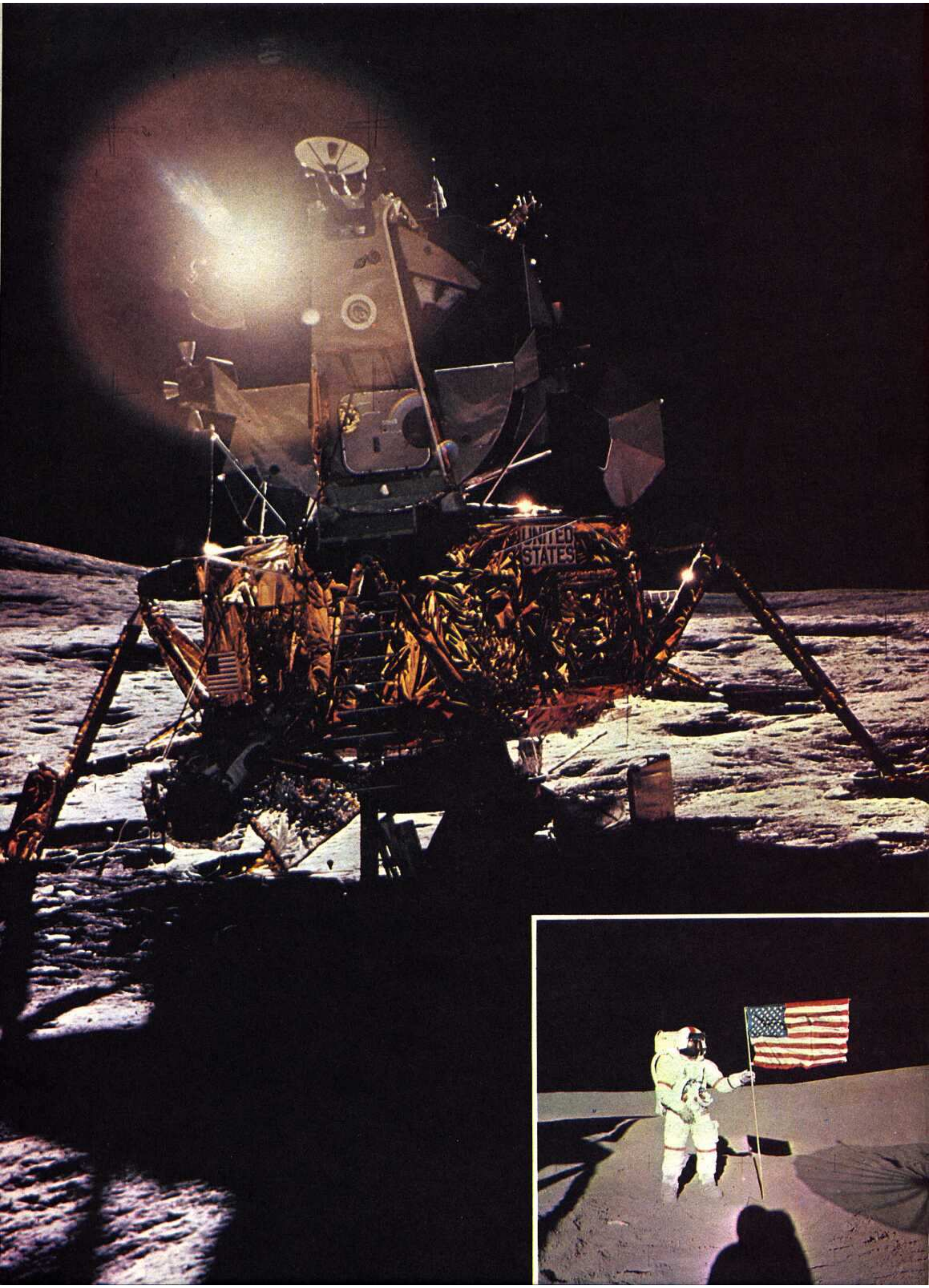
"Phew. . . that was a close shave," said Sorensen quietly.

"I'm sure glad Bill's on our side," answered Grant. "He's told me the whole works over the whisper wheel," the Countdown crewman continued, indicating the gold medallion suspended on a chain around his neck. Bill's wonderful gadget allowed thought transference over vast distances, thus avoiding radio detection by others. "Vallatti was impregnated with some new nerve acid. If he'd ever arrived at Sabine, all of us would have been done for."

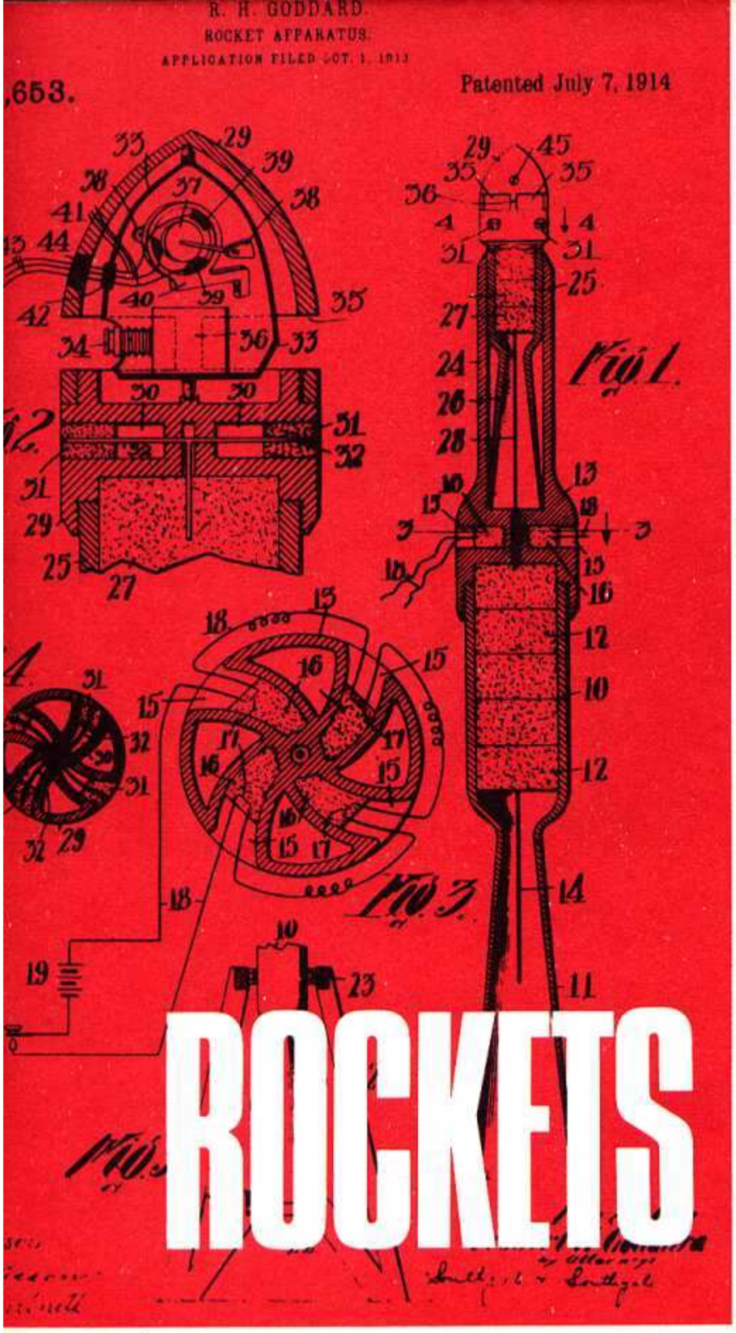
"But how come Vallatti didn't pass out until he'd made contact with us? He'd been given enough of that acid to knock us all out," asked Steve Sorensen.

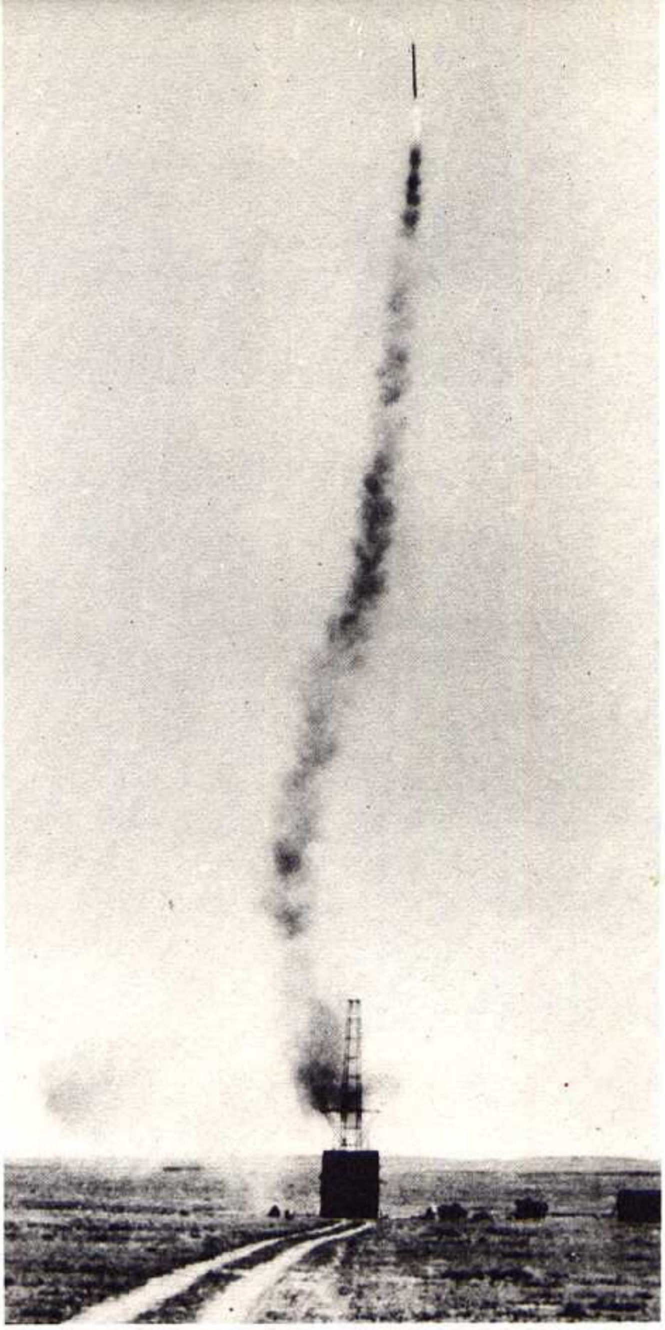
"Quite simple, really," smiled Grant. "We didn't talk to him. It was a recording. Vallatti was unconscious when they loaded him onto that Beetle. And now I'd better go and supervise picking them up. Bill's remaining in the Zephyr Beetle until they've all recovered. They should be back to normal in a day or two."

At the Company headquarters, based in the ancient Pentagon building, a trembling Debrowski was removed from the presence of the furious Costra. The plan had failed and nothing could appease William Costra's mad rage; both he and Debrowski would be sick for many days to come.


UNITED
STATES

ROCKETS





Left: The first patent granted to Dr. Goddard. In it he describes the multi-stage liquid-fuelled rocket.
Above: Dr. Goddard's 1937 rocket was launched by a catapult system.

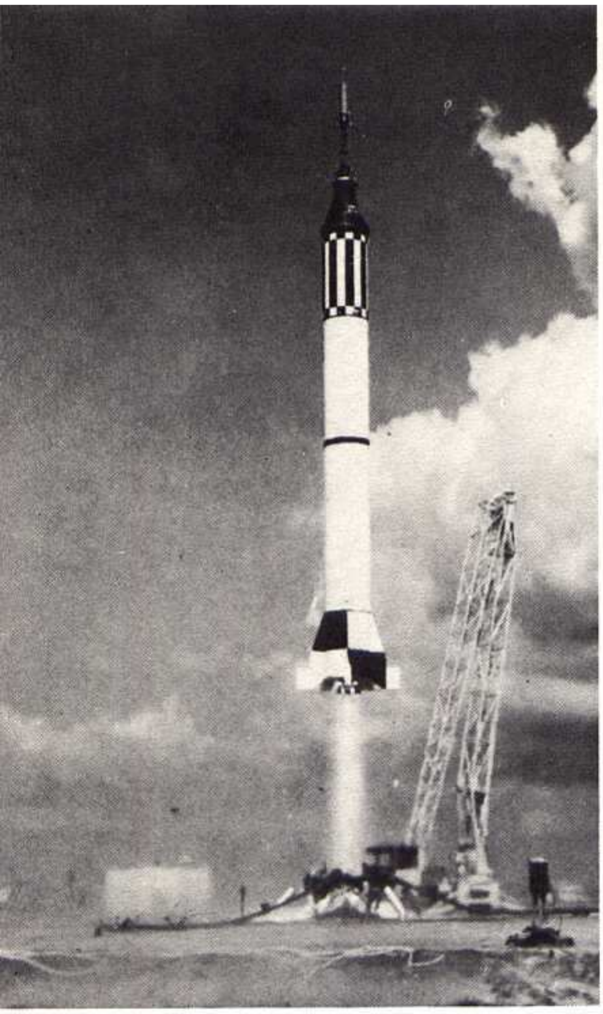
Way back in the early 1920s a headline in a New York newspaper created a big sensation throughout America.

It didn't scream across the front page in large type. It was, in fact, a small headline to a sober story. But its message was crystal clear. A miniature version of a rocket had been tested in America. The rocket had been propelled by liquid fuel. And the man who had built and tested it was confident that one day such rockets would send instruments as far as the moon.

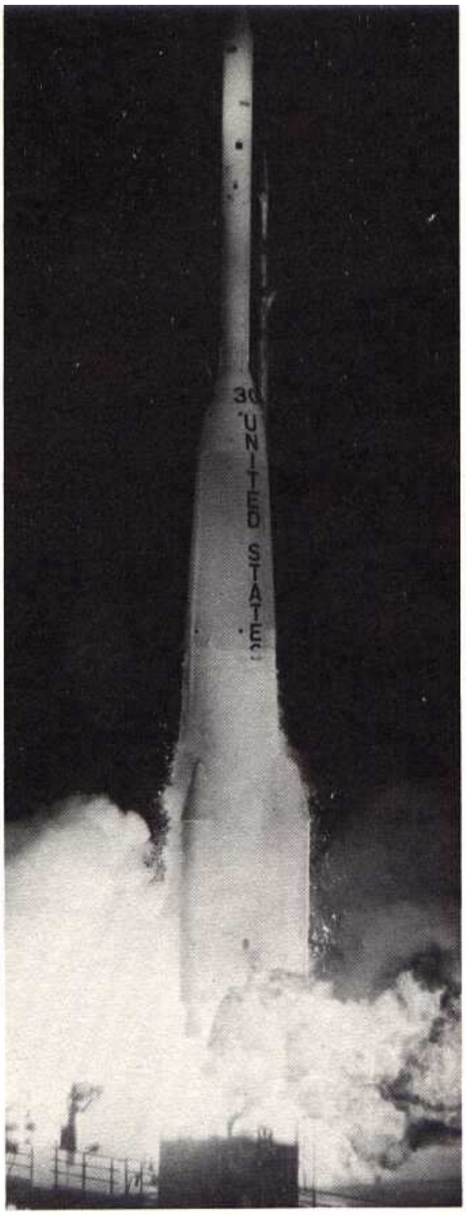
But the man who tested his rocket in the 1920s – Robert Goddard – created a sensation for only a short time. Many people regarded him as just another moon-struck crank.

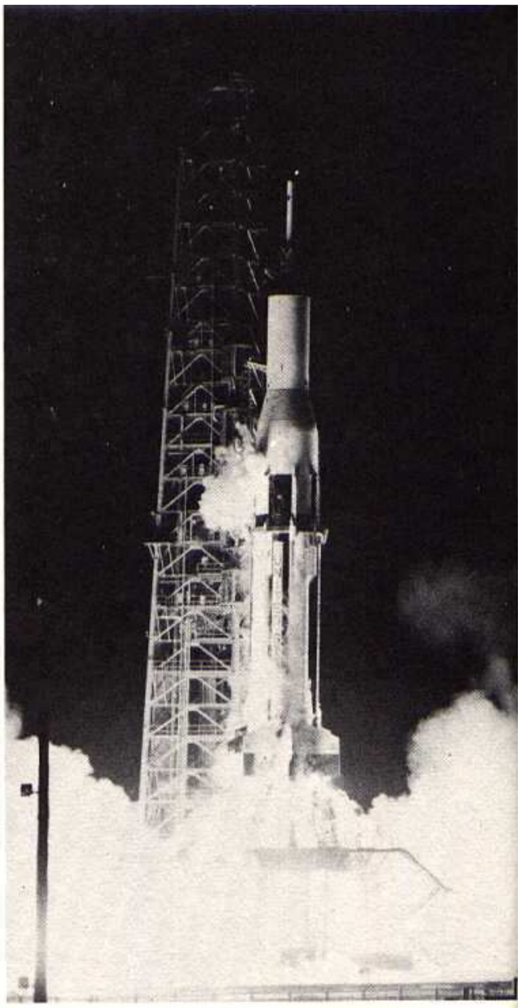
But he went on quietly with his one-man space programme. Goddard was professor of physics at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, and it was in the physics lab there that he worked out his theories. He was convinced that rockets would be easier to control if they were powered by liquid instead of solid fuel and that they could travel beyond the atmosphere by being fired in stages.

Like most pioneers he had his share of



Above: America's first manned space flight. The Redstone rocket boosted Astronaut Alan Shepard's Freedom 7 capsule off for a 15-minute sub-orbital flight.





Left: The Thrust-Augmented Delta has smaller rockets strapped to its first stage.

Above: Saturn 1 blasts off to place a space dust detection satellite into Earth orbit.

failures. But by 1926 he had succeeded in launching a rocket which reached a height of 184 feet and a speed of 60 miles per hour. Goddard patented several of his rocket ideas and, with other launchings, his reputation grew steadily. Eventually he came to be regarded as the father of modern rocketry.

When World War II broke out America was not doing much work on rockets. In Germany, however, when Goddard's work was known, it was a different story. Rocket developments there resulted in the V-2 missiles which bombarded London in the early 1940s.

After the war, rocket technology advanced quickly. Captured V-2s were used in test firings and Germany's leading expert, Wernher von Braun, went to the United States to work. Other German rocket men went to Russia.

In the mid-1950s scientists from many countries decided to pool their resources to make a concentrated study of the Earth. They organised an event called the International Geophysical Year. As part of this world-wide effort, both the United States and Russia announced that they would try to put scientific satellites into Earth orbit.

Russia got first off the mark in October 1957, with Sputnik. The United States followed three months later with Explorer 1.

Both countries used military rockets for these and all their other early satellites. From the point of view of public interest, however, there was one big difference: America announced all her launchings in advance, and carried them out openly, with television cameras in attendance.

There was, of course, a good deal of trial and error in the space launchings of those days. Spectacular explosions on the launch pad were frequent. Some rockets rose only a few feet before they toppled over in a cloud of smoke and flame. But the Americans stuck resolutely to their policy of allowing the world to see everything, and gradually the reliability of rockets improved.

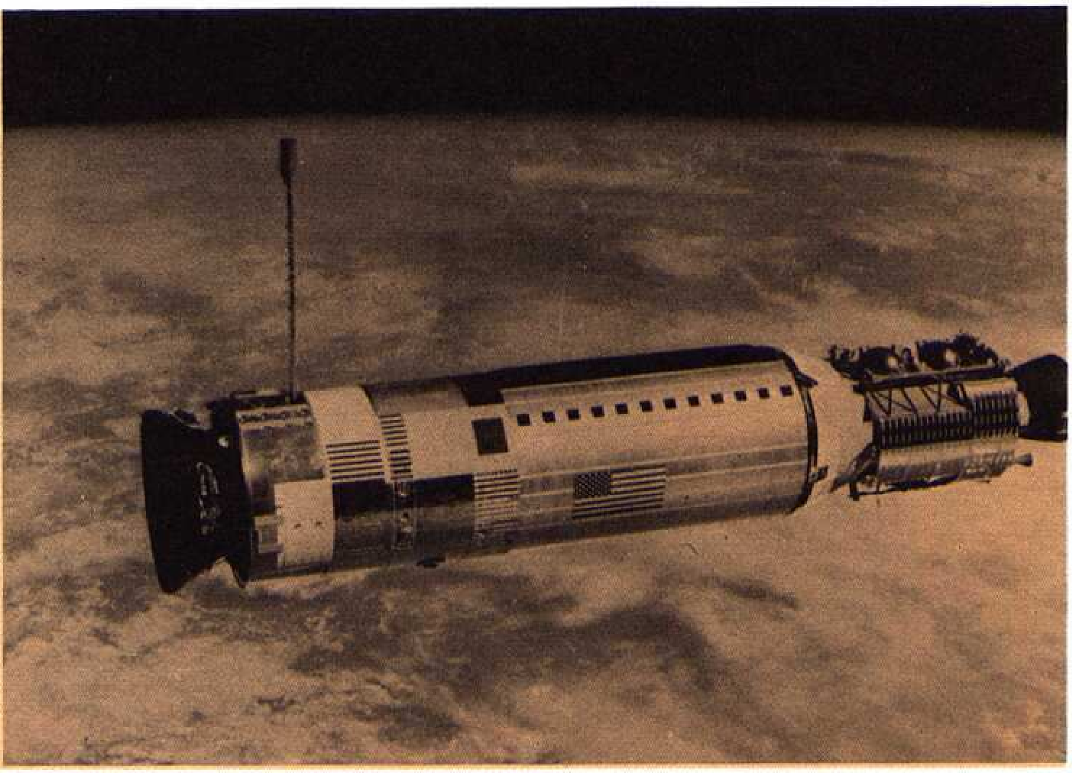
Soon there was another important change. Within a year of the first Sputnik launching, the United States decided to put the exploration of space on to a civilian basis. NASA, the space agency, was set up and began to develop its own rockets.

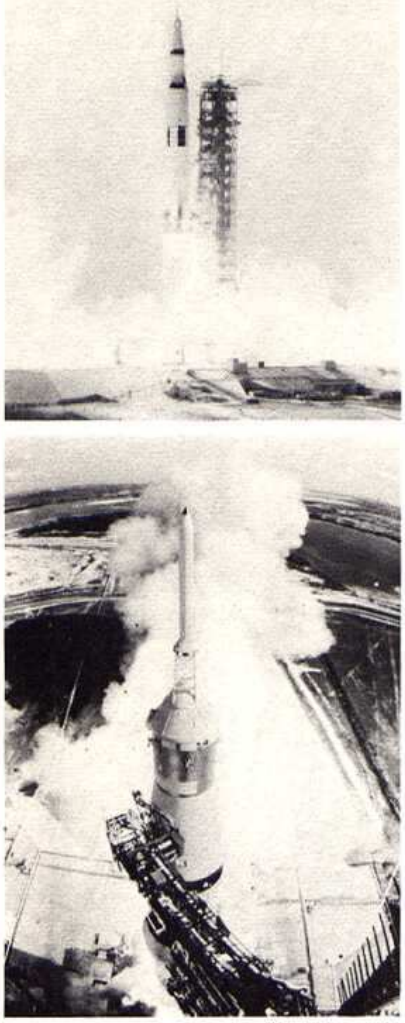
As the goals of space research grew, so did the need for launch vehicles of different sizes and load-carrying ability. On Earth, no delivery service would think of using a ten-ton truck to deliver a few small parcels or would risk a breakdown by overloading a mini van with heavy crates. It was the same at the launch pad. A slim, inexpensive rocket was all that was needed to launch a lightweight scientific satellite. The powerful rockets were kept for the big loads.

The most famous rocket developed by NASA was Saturn 5, the awesome giant used to land America's astronauts on the moon. Two hundred million horse power in its three stages, the five mighty engines of its booster stage generate 7½ million pounds of thrust.

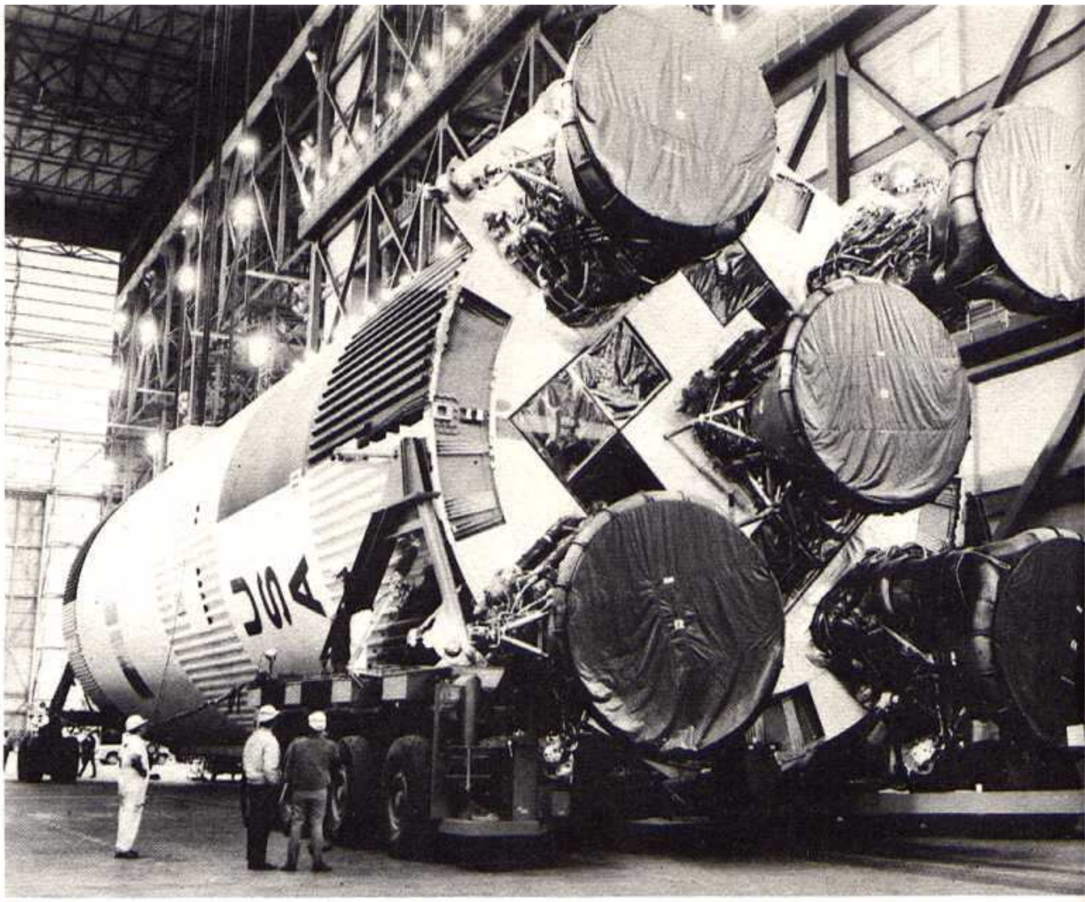
Everything about the Saturn 5 still seems slightly incredible, though most of us have seen its successful launches on television. Even when its fuel tanks are empty it weighs more than 250 tons. When it's fully fuelled and ready for flight, there's nearly 3,000 tons of rocket on the launch pad. Rocket and spacecraft together stand 363 feet high – two feet less than the total

The target rocket which the Gemini astronauts located in space and linked up with in the first docking manoeuvres was part of an Atlas-Agena.





Left: The first moon landing mission. Saturn 5 rises from the launch pad at Cape Kennedy on July 16, 1969.



The first stage of a Saturn 5 rocket is inspected in the workshop. Its five massive engines generate 7½ million pounds of thrust.

height of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Shortly before the first moon landing Charles Lindberg, the first man to make a solo non-stop flight from the United States to Europe, visited the pioneers of space flight at Cape Kennedy. He was really astonished to find that Saturn 5 needs 10 times more fuel in the first second of a mission than he had used in his 33½ hour flight across the Atlantic.

Ironically, it is the Saturn 5's tremendous size, power – and cost – that have spelled its doom. There are a few more Saturns available to complete the Apollo moon landing programme and to launch America's first embryo space station – Skylab. After that it is unlikely that any more giant rockets will be built in America.

The current thinking is that if space exploration is to continue on the massive scale of the past decade, a cheaper launching method will have to be found.

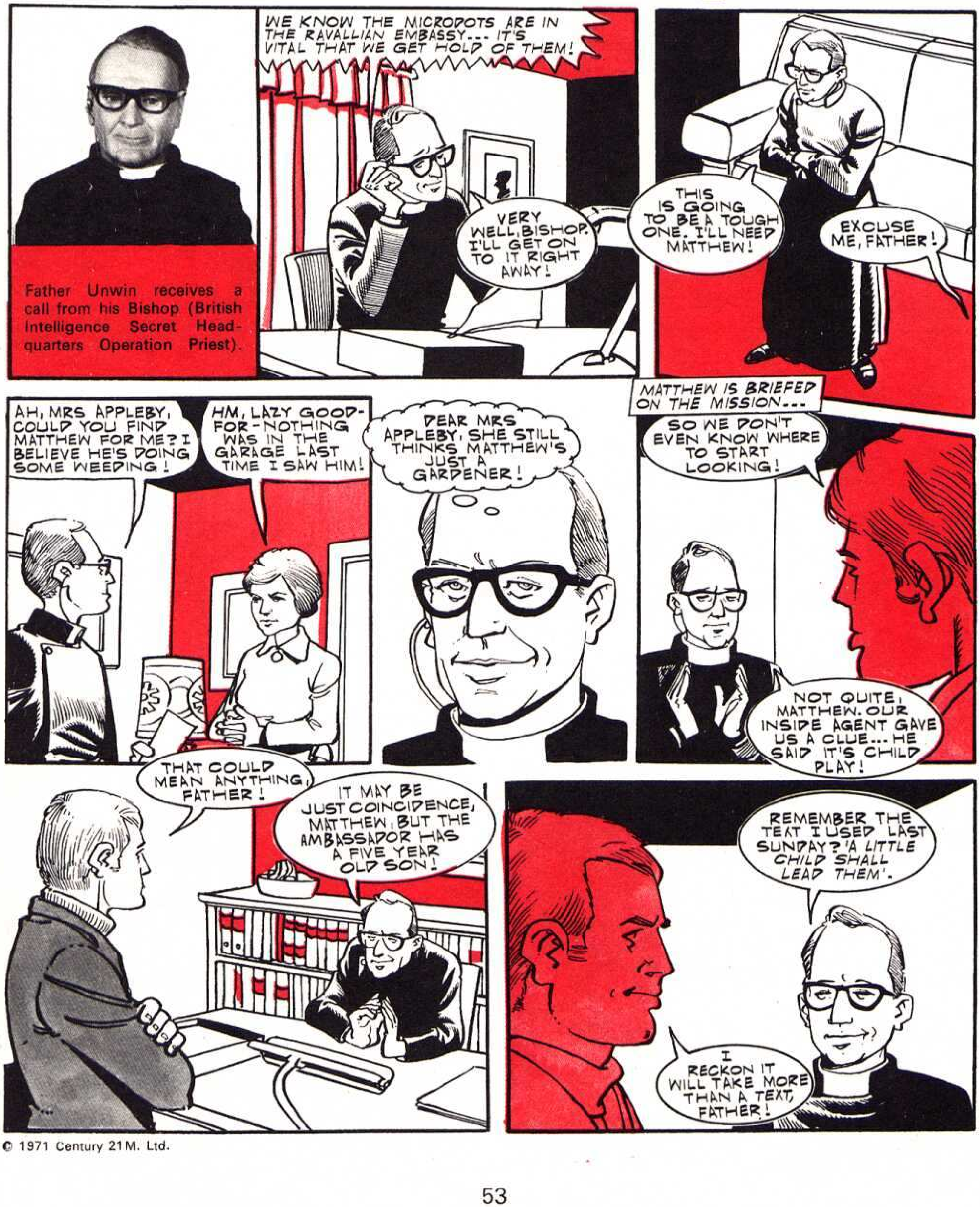
So scientists and engineers are hard at work on a brand new kind of booster rocket, called a space shuttle, which can be used over and over again.

The shuttle is still on the drawing boards, however. It could be another 10 years before it flies. Meanwhile, the art of rocketry and the reliability of the vehicles themselves will continue to improve.

A few of America's old-timers – Vanguard, Jupiter and Redstone – are no longer used for space research. But others – Scout, Delta, Thor-Agena, Atlas Centaur and Saturn among them – will go on putting satellites into Earth orbit or sending probes to the moon and the planets.

Then, one day, in their turn, these wonders of 20th Century rocketry will be swept away on the tidal wave of mounting technology.

THE SECRET SERVICE


Father Unwin receives a call from his Bishop (British Intelligence Secret Headquarters Operation Priest).
WE KNOW THE MICRODOTS ARE IN THE RAVALLIAN EMBASSY... IT'S VITAL THAT WE GET HOLD OF THEM!
VERY WELL, BISHOP. I'LL GET ON TO IT RIGHT AWAY!
THIS IS GOING TO BE A TOUGH ONE. I'LL NEED MATTHEW!
EXCUSE ME, FATHER!
AH, MRS APPLEBY, COULD YOU FIND MATTHEW FOR ME? I BELIEVE HE'S DOING SOME WEEDING!
HM, LAZY GOOD-FOR-NOTHING WAS IN THE GARAGE LAST TIME I SAW HIM!
DEAR MRS APPLEBY, SHE STILL THINKS MATTHEW'S JUST A GARDENER!
MATTHEW IS BRIEFED ON THE MISSION...
SO WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO START LOOKING!
NOT QUITE, MATTHEW. OUR INSIDE AGENT GAVE US A CLUE... HE SAID IT'S CHILD PLAY!
THAT COULD MEAN ANYTHING, FATHER!
IT MAY BE JUST COINCIDENCE, MATTHEW, BUT THE AMBASSADOR HAS A FIVE YEAR OLD SON!
REMEMBER THE TEXT I USED LAST SUNDAY? 'A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM'.
I RECKON IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN A TEXT, FATHER!

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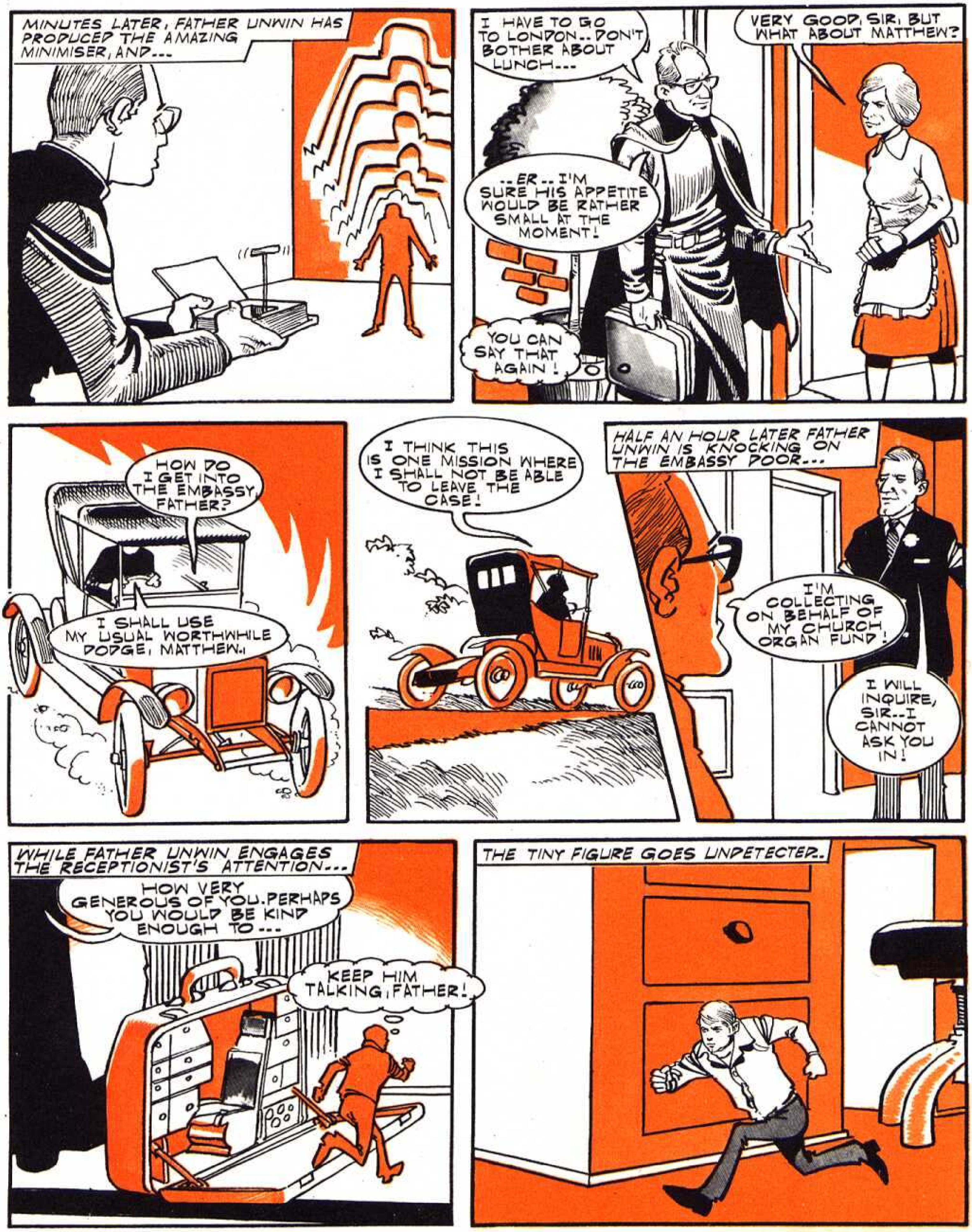
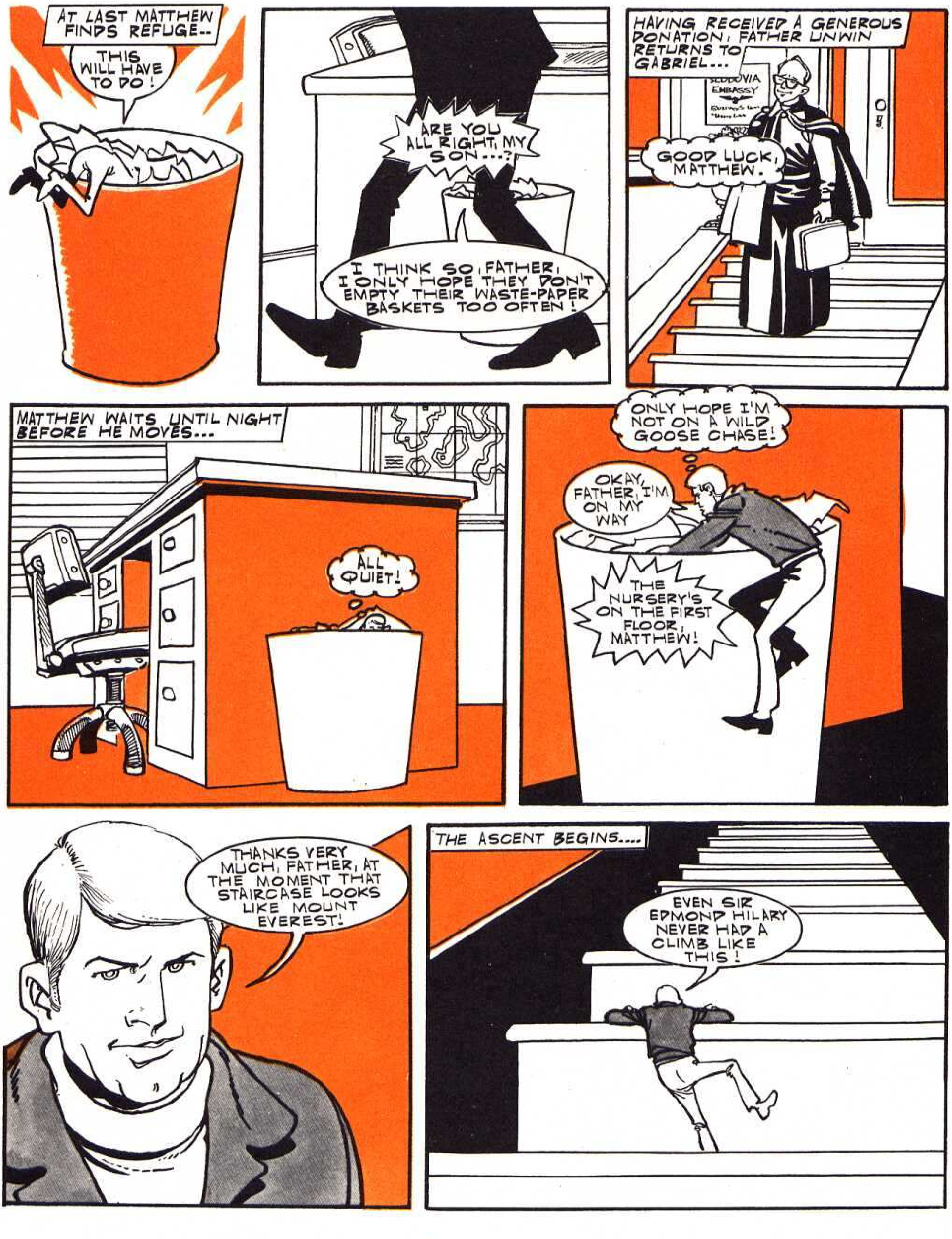
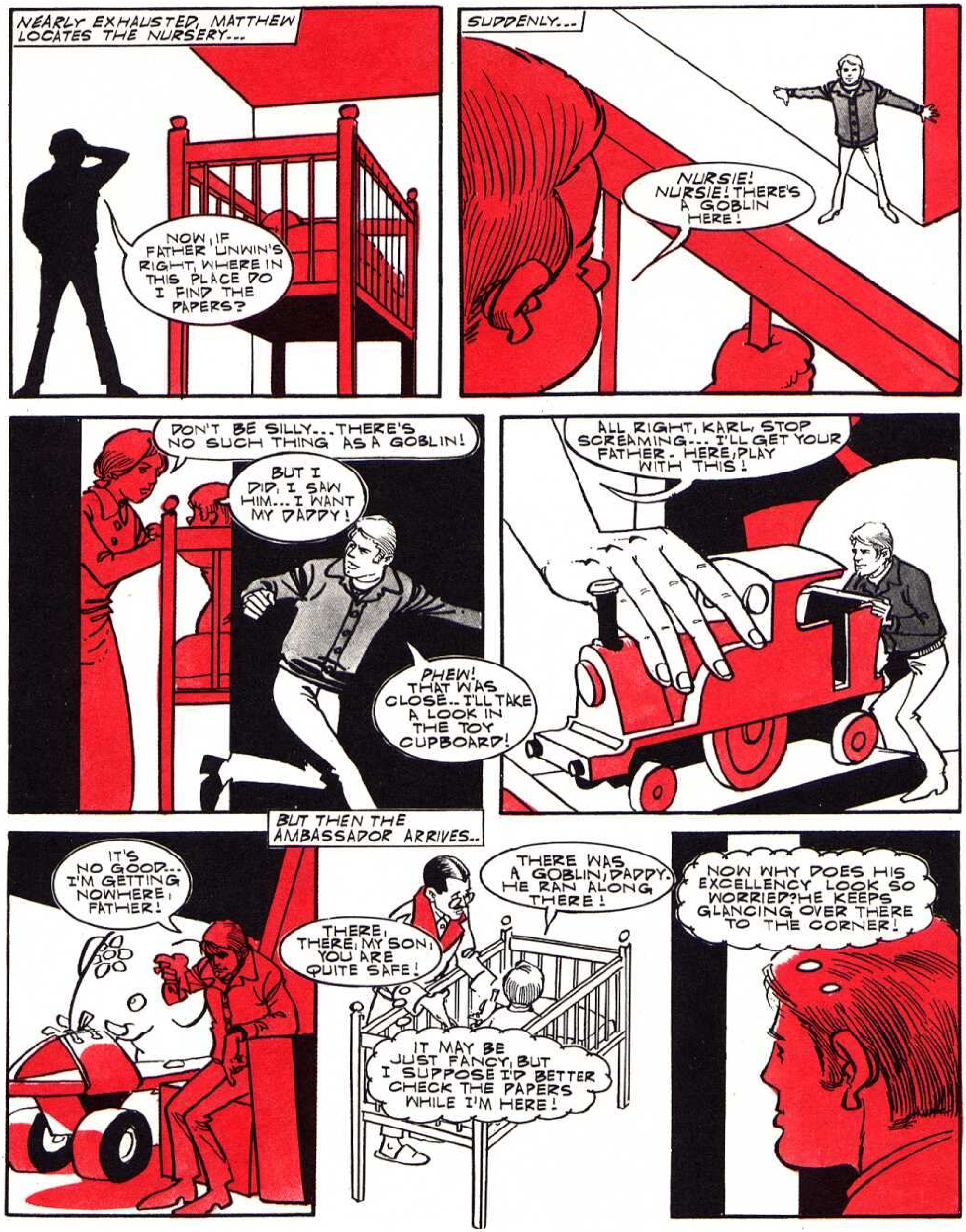
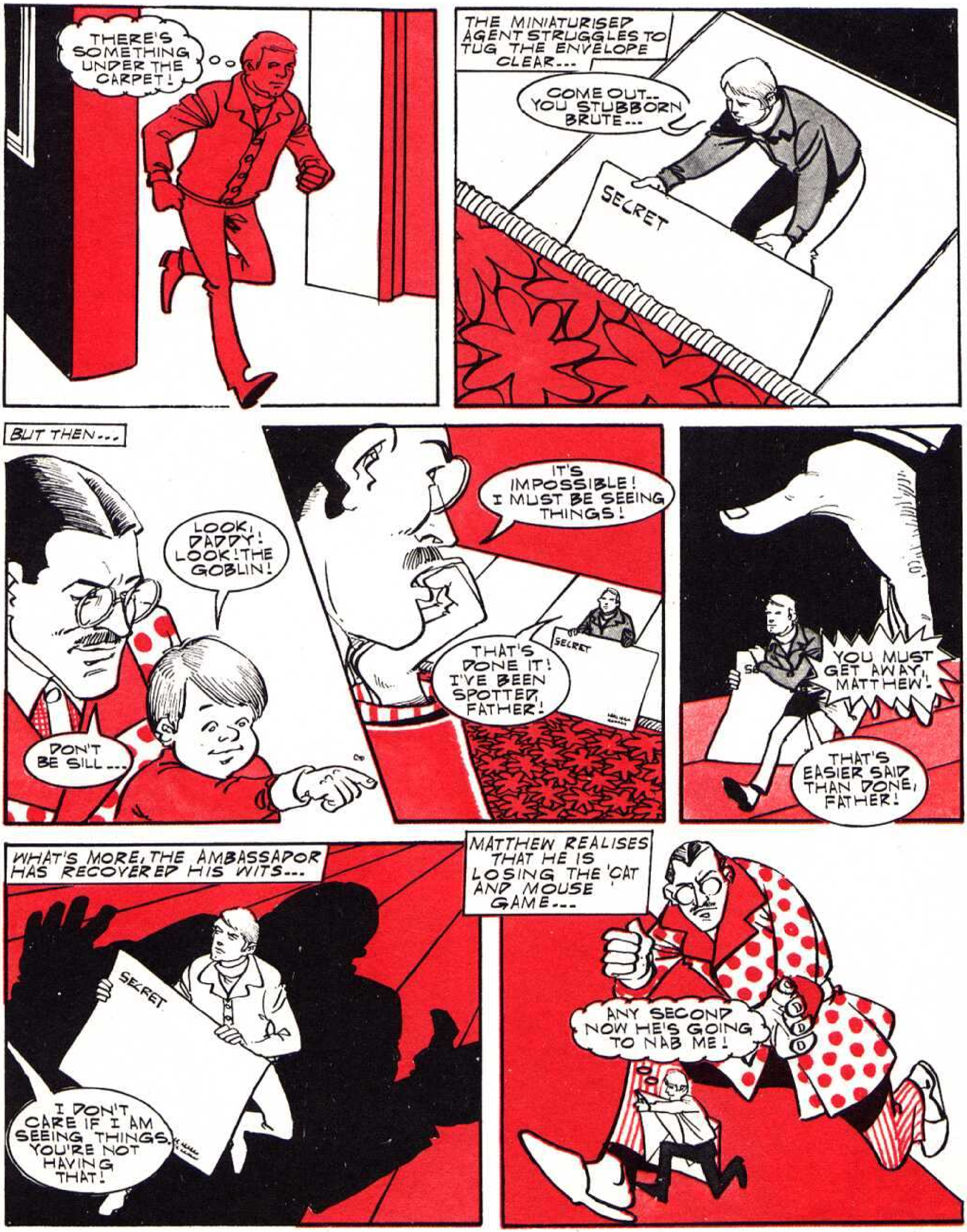
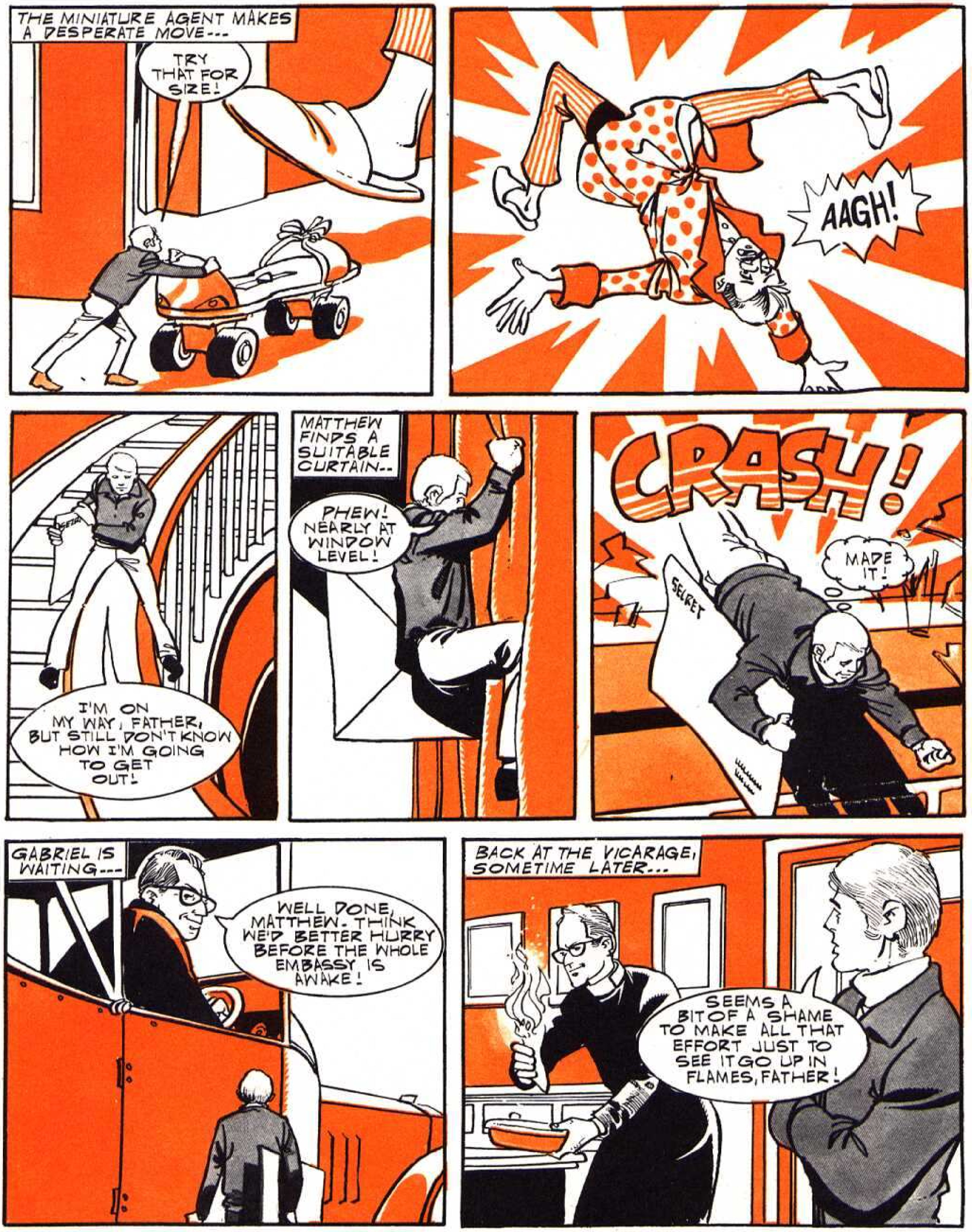

MINUTES LATER, FATHER UNWIN HAS PRODUCED THE AMAZING MINIMISER, AND---
I HAVE TO GO TO LONDON.. DON'T BOTHER ABOUT LUNCH---
VERY GOOD, SIR, BUT WHAT ABOUT MATTHEW?
..ER.. I'M SURE HIS APPETITE WOULD BE RATHER SMALL AT THE MOMENT!
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!
HOW DO I GET INTO THE EMBASSY, FATHER?
I SHALL USE MY USUAL WORTHWHILE DODGE, MATTHEW.
I THINK THIS IS ONE MISSION WHERE I SHALL NOT BE ABLE TO LEAVE THE CASE!
HALF AN HOUR LATER FATHER UNWIN IS KNOCKING ON THE EMBASSY DOOR---
I'M COLLECTING ON BEHALF OF MY CHURCH ORGAN FUND!
I WILL INQUIRE, SIR--I CANNOT ASK YOU IN!
WHILE FATHER UNWIN ENGAGES THE RECEPTIONIST'S ATTENTION---
HOW VERY GENEROUS OF YOU. PERHAPS YOU WOULD BE KIND ENOUGH TO---
KEEP HIM TALKING, FATHER!
THE TINY FIGURE GOES UNDETECTED.


AT LAST MATTHEW FINDS REFUGE--
THIS WILL HAVE TO DO!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MY SON...?
I THINK SO, FATHER, I ONLY HOPE THEY DON'T EMPTY THEIR WASTE-PAPER BASKETS TOO OFTEN!
HAVING RECEIVED A GENEROUS DONATION, FATHER UNWIN RETURNS TO GABRIEL...
SLODOVIA EMBASSY
GOOD LUCK, MATTHEW.
MATTHEW WAITS UNTIL NIGHT BEFORE HE MOVES...
ALL QUIET!
ONLY HOPE I'M NOT ON A WILD GOOSE CHASE!
OKAY, FATHER, I'M ON MY WAY
THE NURSERY'S ON THE FIRST FLOOR, MATTHEW!
THANKS VERY MUCH, FATHER, AT THE MOMENT THAT STAIRCASE LOOKS LIKE MOUNT EVEREST!
THE ASCENT BEGINS....
EVEN SIR EDMOND HILARY NEVER HAD A CLIMB LIKE THIS!

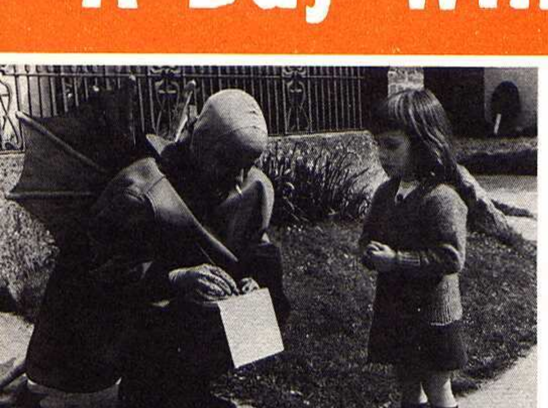

NEARLY EXHAUSTED, MATTHEW LOCATES THE NURSERY...
NOW, IF FATHER UNWIN'S RIGHT, WHERE IN THIS PLACE DO I FIND THE PAPERS?
SUDDENLY...
NURSIE! NURSIE! THERE'S A GOBLIN HERE!
DON'T BE SILLY... THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A GOBLIN!
BUT I DID, I SAW HIM... I WANT MY DADDY!
PHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE.. I'LL TAKE A LOOK IN THE TOY CUPBOARD!
ALL RIGHT, KARL, STOP SCREAMING... I'LL GET YOUR FATHER. HERE, PLAY WITH THIS!
BUT THEN THE AMBASSADOR ARRIVES..
IT'S NO GOOD... I'M GETTING NOWHERE, FATHER!
THERE WAS A GOBLIN, DADDY. HE RAN ALONG THERE!
THERE, THERE, MY SON, YOU ARE QUITE SAFE!
IT MAY BE JUST FANCY, BUT I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER CHECK THE PAPERS WHILE I'M HERE!
NOW WHY DOES HIS EXCELLENCY LOOK SO WORRIED? HE KEEPS GLANCING OVER THERE TO THE CORNER!


THERE'S SOMETHING UNDER THE CARPET!
THE MINIATURISED AGENT STRUGGLES TO TUG THE ENVELOPE CLEAR...
COME OUT-- YOU STUBBORN BRUTE...
SECRET
BUT THEN...
LOOK, DADDY! LOOK! THE GOBLIN!
DON'T BE SILL...
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I MUST BE SEEING THINGS!
SECRET
THAT'S DONE IT! I'VE BEEN SPOTTED, FATHER!
YOU MUST GET AWAY, MATTHEW!
THAT'S EASIER SAID THAN DONE, FATHER!
WHAT'S MORE, THE AMBASSADOR HAS RECOVERED HIS WITS...
SECRET
I DON'T CARE IF I AM SEEING THINGS. YOU'RE NOT HAVING THAT!
MATTHEW REALISES THAT HE IS LOSING THE 'CAT AND MOUSE' GAME...
ANY SECOND NOW HE'S GOING TO NAB ME!


THE MINIATURE AGENT MAKES A DESPERATE MOVE---
TRY THAT FOR SIZE!
AAGH!
I'M ON MY WAY, FATHER, BUT STILL DON'T KNOW HOW I'M GOING TO GET OUT!
MATTHEW FINDS A SUITABLE CURTAIN--
PHEW! NEARLY AT WINDOW LEVEL!
CRASH!
MADE IT!
SECRET
GABRIEL IS WAITING---
WELL DONE, MATTHEW- THINK WE'D BETTER HURRY BEFORE THE WHOLE EMBASSY IS AWAKE!
BACK AT THE VICARAGE, SOMETIME LATER...
SEEMS A BIT OF A SHAME TO MAKE ALL THAT EFFORT JUST TO SEE IT GO UP IN FLAMES, FATHER!

Above: Jon Pertwee takes a quick look through the script before shooting begins.
Right: The cameraman focuses in for a close-up.
Below: The cast wait patiently, while the huge arc lamps are set up.

A Day with Dr. Who



Above: Autograph from Bok the demon. Actor Stanley Mason obliges.
Right: Ten minutes off for coffee and a bacon sandwich.

The sun shines gloriously in a clear blue sky, at least that's some consolation for having to get up so early. The winding lanes of Wiltshire rise and fall before us. The Renault rounds another bend and we've arrived at Aldbourne. We park the car in front of the village pond. While Roger unloads his cameras I take a look around.

Suddenly, a van sweeps into view, skidding noisily on the loose gravel. On its side, in large gold letters, we read BBC. The driver directs us up another narrow street which opens out onto a pretty village green. Still nothing out of the ordinary, just four men in conversation beneath the tower of the village church.

"Excuse me, is one of you gentlemen Peter Grimwade?" I ask. They all shake their heads.

"He's probably up there," I'm told. Next to a village school we find what we're looking for; a

Above left: Lunch is taken in a variety of places. Betsy becomes a restaurant car.
Above: Ready for action, the Brigadier, actor Nicholas Courtney.
Left: Jon Pertwee signs yet another autograph for a young admirer.
Below: The armourer's job to is keep this arsenal under strict security.

coach, three pantechnicons and numerous bottle-green Land-Rovers and an absolute melee of actors, extras and technicians.

I find Pete Grimwade and introduce myself.

"Can I see you later?" he called, at the same time supervising the removal of some large bundles of twigs and a maypole from the props wagon.

One of the supporting cast, Damaris Hayman, is having her make-up done. A group of Morris dancers jingle their way through the general hub-bub. Soldiers with UNIT on their shoulder flashes loll around.

"Good morning, everyone," says a cultured voice, and behind me, resplendent in crimson velvet jacket with a purple and black cloak, is Dr. Who, or, to be more precise, Jon Pertwee. We just have time to swap a few words before the make-up girl grabs his arm and leads him away. Still there's plenty of people to talk to now. A pretty girl in a tan trouser suit I recognise immediately as the Doctor's able assistant Jo (actress Katie Manning). A man with a briefcase walks by, strangely familiar, but with something missing. Of course – it's the Brigadier (Nicholas Courtney) minus his moustache. Then, making an entrance that any of the cast could have been proud of, comes 'Betsy', gleaming yellow in the morning sun.

By ten the day's shooting has begun. It starts amongst the gravestones of the churchyard and progresses to the village green. Pieced together like a jigsaw puzzle, sometimes the shot may take only seconds, sometimes minutes. To the bystander, it all hardly makes sense as a story, but at the end of the day, which will end at about seven or eight in the evening, several cans of film will be ready for the editor to decipher in the cutting room.

Equally puzzling was the use of two giant arc lamps (looking a bit like monsters themselves) shining behind the camera crew. I asked the lighting cameraman and he explained that the light was so strong that it was causing heavy shadows across the faces of the cast.

The three short breaks from shooting were spent around the catering van. Star, technician or extra, no-one gets special treatment; it's first come, first served.

"In the acting profession you learn to be a team man," explained Jon Pertwee.

Countdown Editor Dennis Hooper chats to Jon Pertwee about Betsy.

U.F.O.S in history

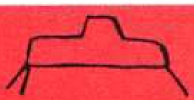
There are many who believe that Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs), or flying saucers, are a modern "invention". UFOs, however, are a worldwide phenomenon and they have probably been around for a very long time.

Certainly the nine objects which airman Kenneth Arnold saw over the Rocky Mountains near Mount Rainier on June 24, 1947, were unidentifiable: so much so that when questioned about them, Arnold likened their speedy, undulating flight to the motion of "saucers being skipped over water". Newspaper reporters did not miss that chance, and the unfortunate name "flying saucer" was born ! Yet thousands of people, many of them in responsible positions, continue to see and report strange aerial visitors which sometimes land.

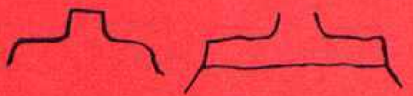
People of the past saw strange unidentifiable objects, and gave them appropriate name-tags, just as did the newspaper men of 1947: we suspect now that "Chariots in the sky", "Flying wheels", "Fiery clouds", "Whirlwinds", "Flying shields", "Air ships" and so on were things people nowadays might label "Flying saucers" or UFOs.

Many puzzling events are recorded in the histories of ancient peoples, the best known of these being in the Bible.

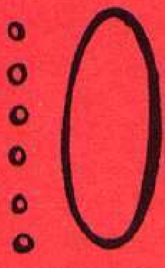
The prophet Elijah had gone with his follower Elisha to the ancient city of Jericho. In the Second Book of Kings, Chapter 2, verses 11–13, we read:



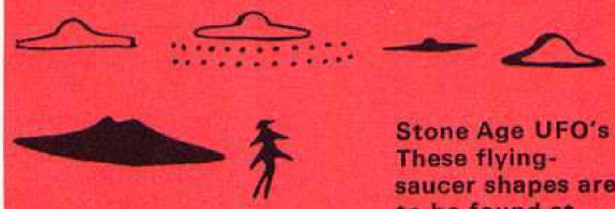
A representation found above the body of a dead 'man', from the Pech Merle cave, Lot.



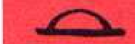
From Cognac, a cave at Lot, another symbol associated with a dead body.



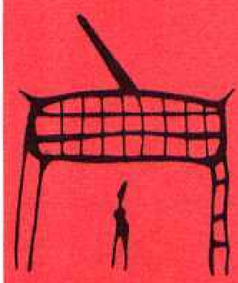
Over 20.000 years old, a symbol found at the Las Chimineas cave, Santander.



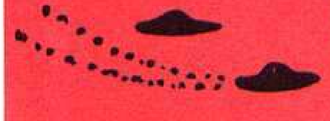
Stone Age UFO's ? These flying-saucer shapes are to be found at the Les Combarelles cave, Dordogne.



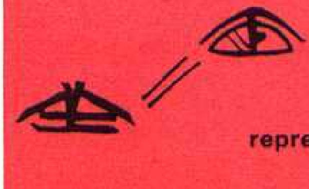
At the Les Trois Freres cave, Ariege, another 'unidentified object' symbol can be seen.



This image, from Ussat, Ariege, is suggestive of a landed object with legs, ladder, antenna and pilot.



More shapes resembling 'flying saucers', found this time on the roof of a cave at Niaux, Ariege.



Could this Stone Age drawing, also at Niaux, Ariege, represent a UFO taking off?

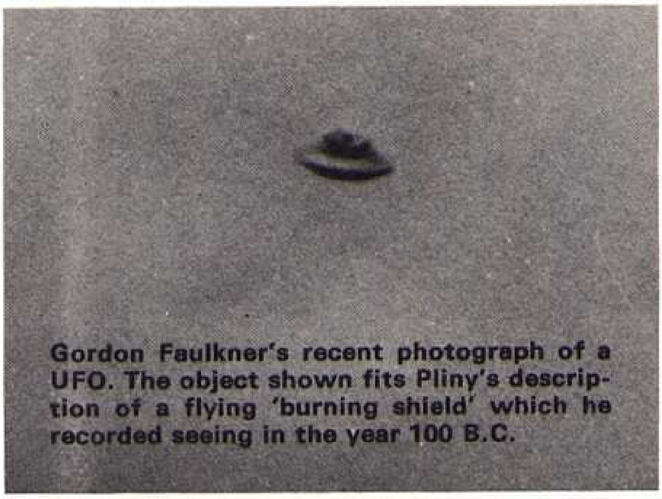
"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

It is not suggested that you believe automatically that this was a UFO event. It *is* suggested, however, that you bear it in mind, and compare it with the thousands of more recently recorded events. The same applies to the story of Ezekiel, and many others.

Monsieur Michel has made a study of the fabulous cave paintings left by the men of the middle and upper Palaeolithic, or Stone Age in France and Northern Spain. The artists of the Magdalenian periods of about 12,000 to 10,000 B.C. were very fine craftsmen.

These reliable Stone Age painters also portrayed among their animal scenes strange shapes and signs that have puzzled scholars ever since the re-discovery of the cave paintings by modern man. Aimé Michel points out that many of these signs bear a remarkable similarity to the shapes of UFOs reported in the last 25 years. Furthermore the only caves where the signs are found lie in regions where there has been an abundance of modern UFO reports.

Our illustrations give a selection of the signs and a few of the animals so that you can judge for yourselves.



Gordon Faulkner's recent photograph of a UFO. The object shown fits Pliny's description of a flying 'burning shield' which he recorded seeing in the year 100 B.C.

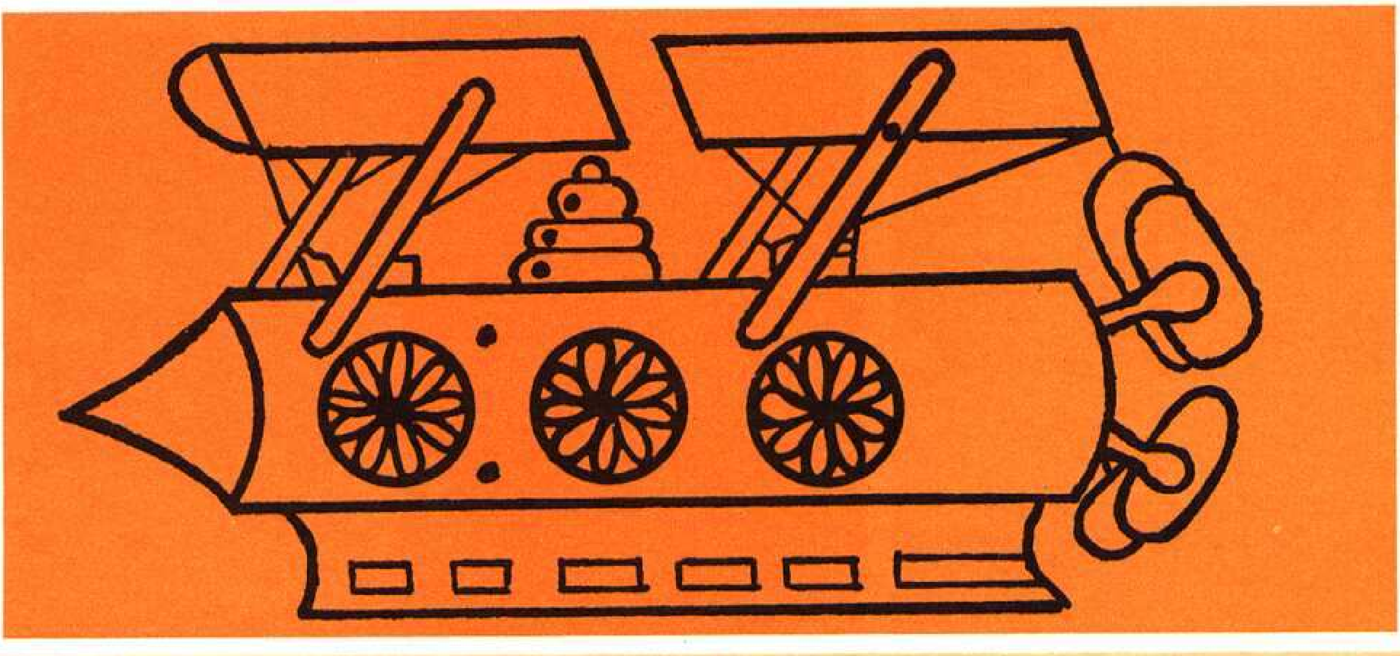
Pliny, in his *Natural History* (Vol. II, Chap. XXXIV), has a story of a burning shield, scattering sparks, which moved across the sky from west to east in the time of the consuls Lucius Valerius and Gaius Marcus (100 B.C.). There were many others in Roman times.

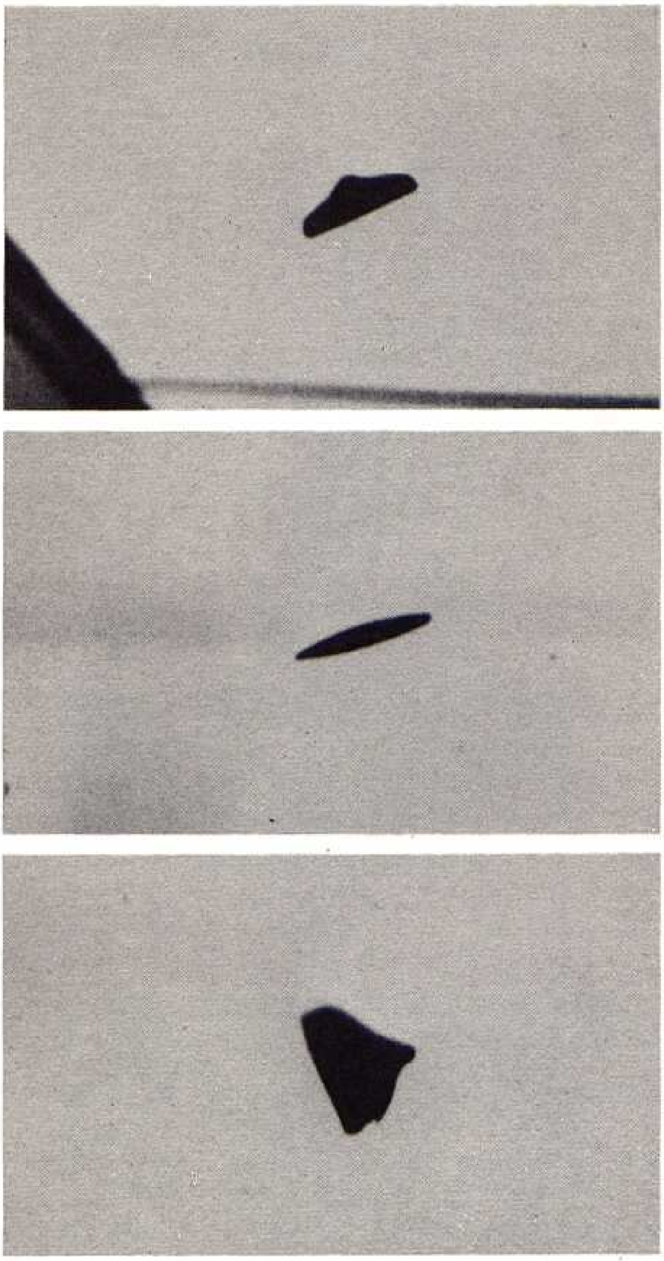
Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons, left an account, when he died in A.D. 840, of how he had come upon a mob in Lyons who were stoning to death three men and a woman, "aerial sailors" accused of landing from a cloudship that had come from the region of *Magonia* (a *magic* land, fabled country of the skies) and despoiling crops.

In A.D. 1211 an English scholar, Gervase of Tilbury, wrote an unusual story allegedly from Bristol.

Citizens of Bristol were leaving church

A drawing based on a sketch by Capt. James Hooton, of an object he claimed to see in April, 1897.





These photographs, taken in 1966, show that this particular UFO could apparently change shape. The second photograph shows a cigar-shaped object which sounds similar to that sighted on May 18th, 1909 by Mr. C. Nethbridge and, the next day, by Mr. Chatten.

after Mass one feast day. The weather was cloudy and misty. Suddenly an anchor on a rope descended from the clouds and caught in a heap of stones. Movements of the rope suggested that someone, or something, hidden in the clouds, was attempting to free the anchor. A shout was heard from above, and then, suddenly, a 'man' swarmed down the rope and released the anchor.

Unhappily for the 'man', before he could be hauled clear, he was grabbed by the outraged citizens. It seemed – after he had been pushed around – that he was suffocating in the moist air, and he died. The 'ship' in the clouds presumably cut the rope and departed.

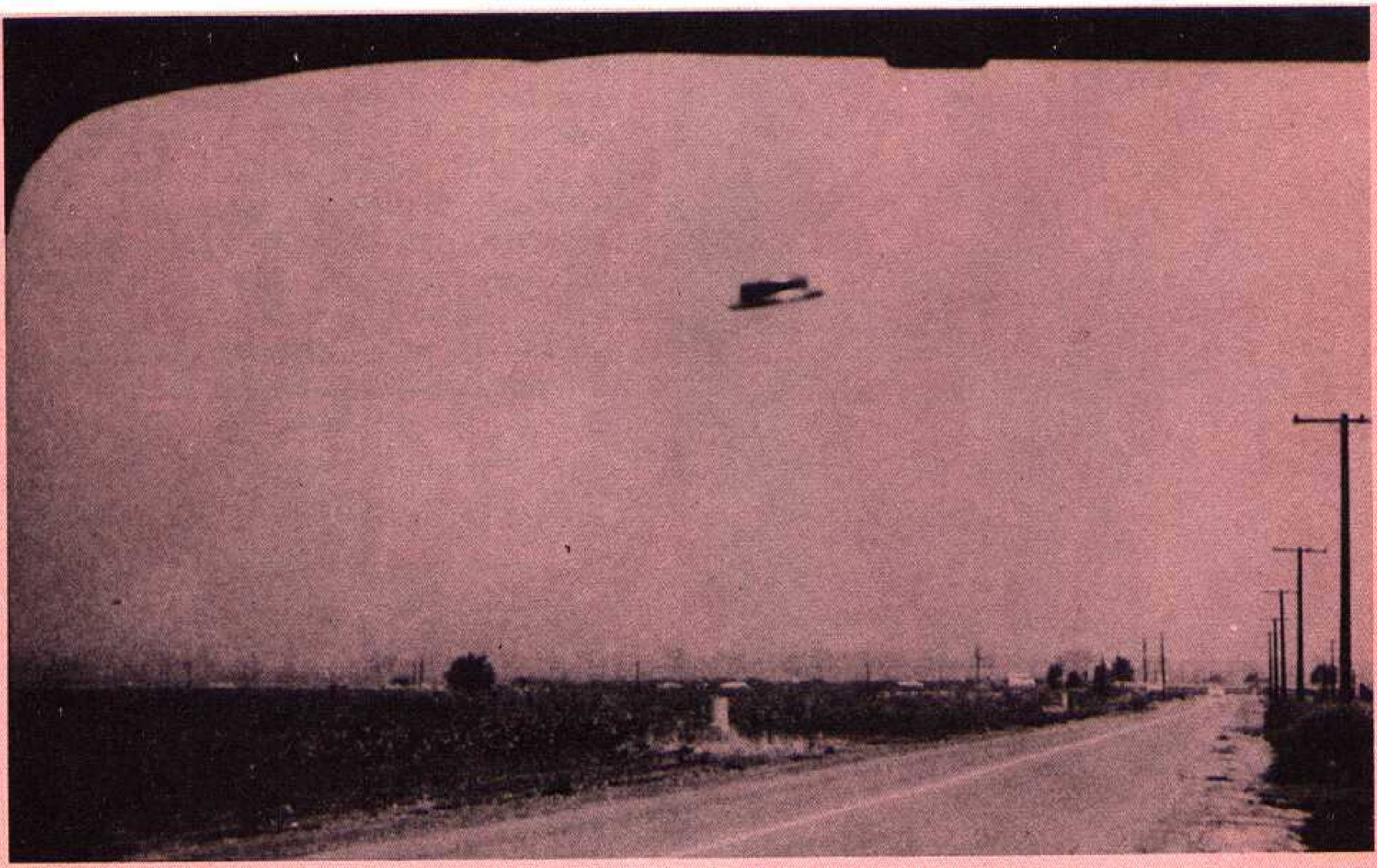
One night during the second half of March, 1897, Iowa farmer Robert Hibbard, who lived 15 miles north of Sioux City, Iowa, claimed that an anchor, hanging from a drag rope attached to the end of an airship, had caught him by the trousers. He was dragged several dozen feet, and was only released, to fall to the ground, when his trousers gave way under the strain and ripped. As Mr. Hibbard had a reputation for honesty and truthfulness, local newspapers guessed he must have been dreaming!

From that time, and for several weeks into April, 1897, scores of reports of the "airship" flooded the mid-Western States. Chicago, Michigan, Kansas and Iowa were particularly affected. Contemporary drawings depict remarkable Heath-Robinson type contraptions, in no way similar to the great airships of the early 20th Century.

The only airborne vehicles carrying passengers which could possibly have been seen anywhere in North America in 1897 were free-flying spherical balloons: no form of dirigible or heavier-than-air flying machine was flying – or could fly – at that time in America.

One April morning in 1897 Mr. Hamilton and his family were awakened by a frightful noise among their cattle. Thinking the animals were being worried by a dog, they armed themselves with axes and ran outside. To their astonishment, they saw an airship descending over the 'cow lot'. Thirty feet above the ground, it appeared to be a huge cigar-shaped object with a glass-like carriage underneath. The carriage was occupied by six strange beings who were jabbering together. Suddenly a light was turned on to the astonished farmers. At the same time a big turbine wheel under the carriage began to buzz and turn, and the craft rose to 300 feet or so.

Then it was that the farmers saw that a cable hanging from the airship was looped in a noose around the neck of a heifer, which was bawling, and jumping about. The farmers ran to release the animal, but failed to do so. It was lifted up towards the airship, which sailed away towards the north-west.



Compare this UFO, photographed in 1965, with some objects of similar shape shown in the Stone Age cave drawings.

By now hundreds of stories of 1897 (and 1896) airship UFOs have been retrieved from the newspaper archives of the times. Airships, however, weren't seen only in the United States.

England and Wales had an airship wave of their own in 1909. There really were airships (mostly German) in those days, but those monsters were quite dissimilar from the objects reported by the newspapers.

'Airships' were also seen in New Zealand in 1909. The records show that no man-made dirigibles were there, or capable of flying there from Europe, at that time.

World War II produced its own brand of unidentified flying objects. Flying discs were frequently reported by airmen of both sides. The British and the American fliers knew them as 'Foo-fighters'; at one stage each side thought they were secret weapons operated by the enemy! Naturally there was not a great deal of publicity for these visitations, but the first post-war UFO wave caused quite a scare.

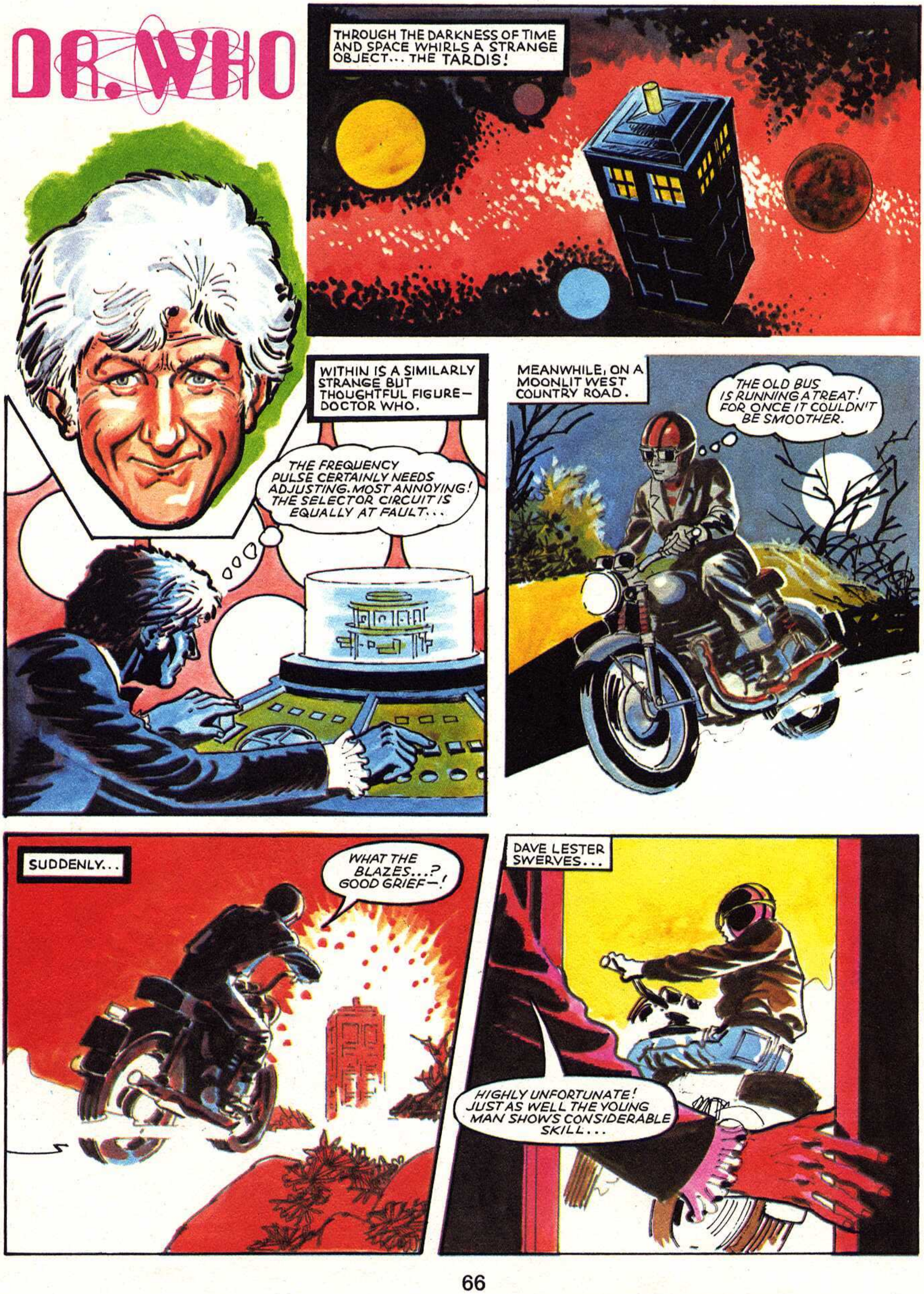
It happened in 1946, a year before Kenneth Arnold saw his 'saucers' over the Rockies. When the news broke that scores of flaming, or luminous, objects were being reported over Sweden (and, to a lesser extent, Norway and Finland), it was conjectured that the Russians had captured a number of German V-weapons, and were busily 'trying them out'. When the number of reports reached the 1,000 mark, that notion had been discarded. Most of the reports were of cylindrical objects, but some were said to have been spherical; some exploded in mid-air, but no fragments were found; others dived into lakes while some approached, stopped, hovered and then went back from whence they had come! Some of these mystery visitors were plotted in trajectories of over 1,000 km., which was far in excess of the German flying bombs. To this day the 'ghost rockets' remain unidentified.

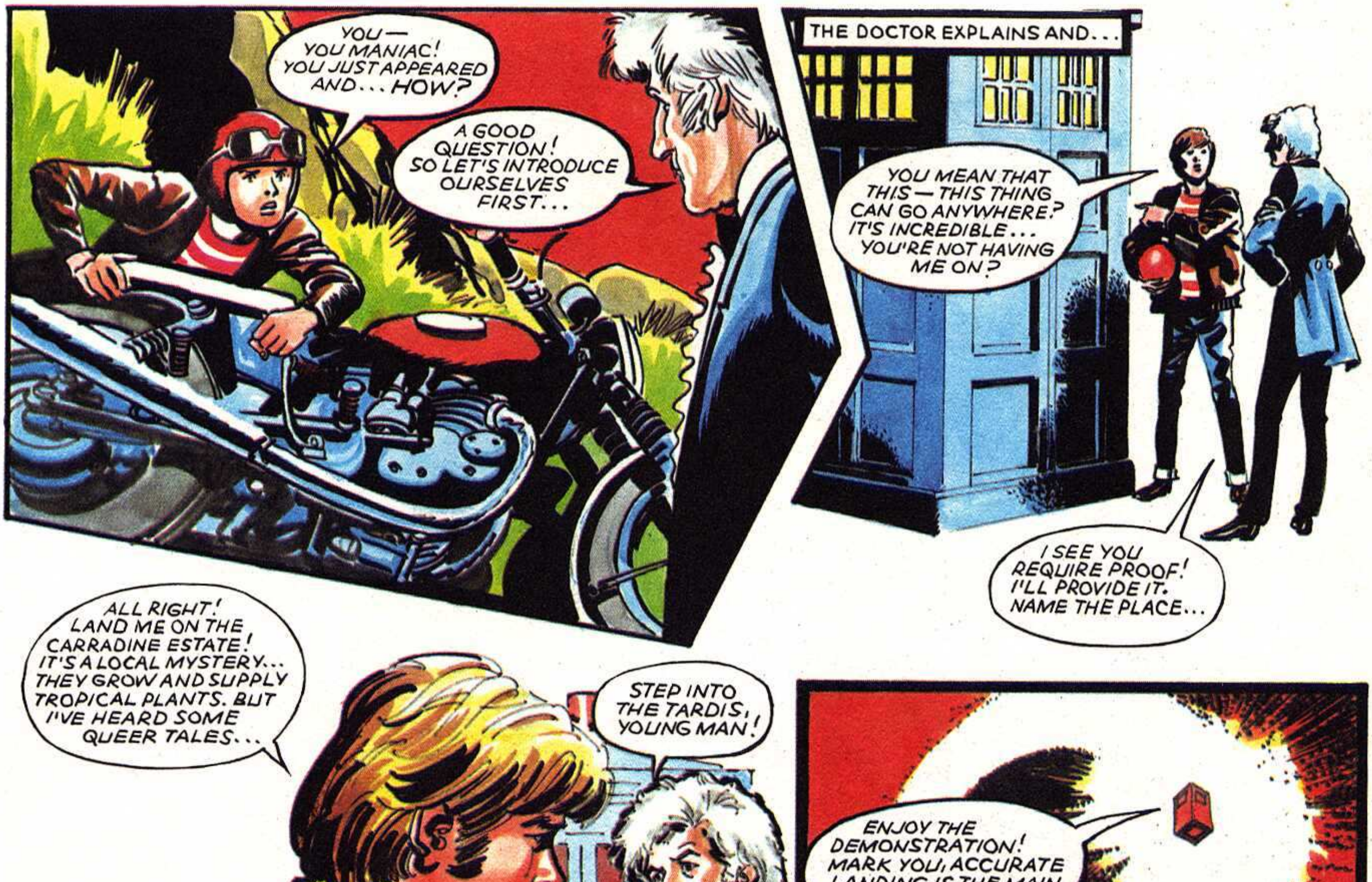
And so to 1947, and the first modern publicity for UFOs. What they are, and where they come from, nobody here on Earth knows. When we have gathered in sufficient facts, then, and then only, will we begin to discover patterns of behaviour of the flying saucers.

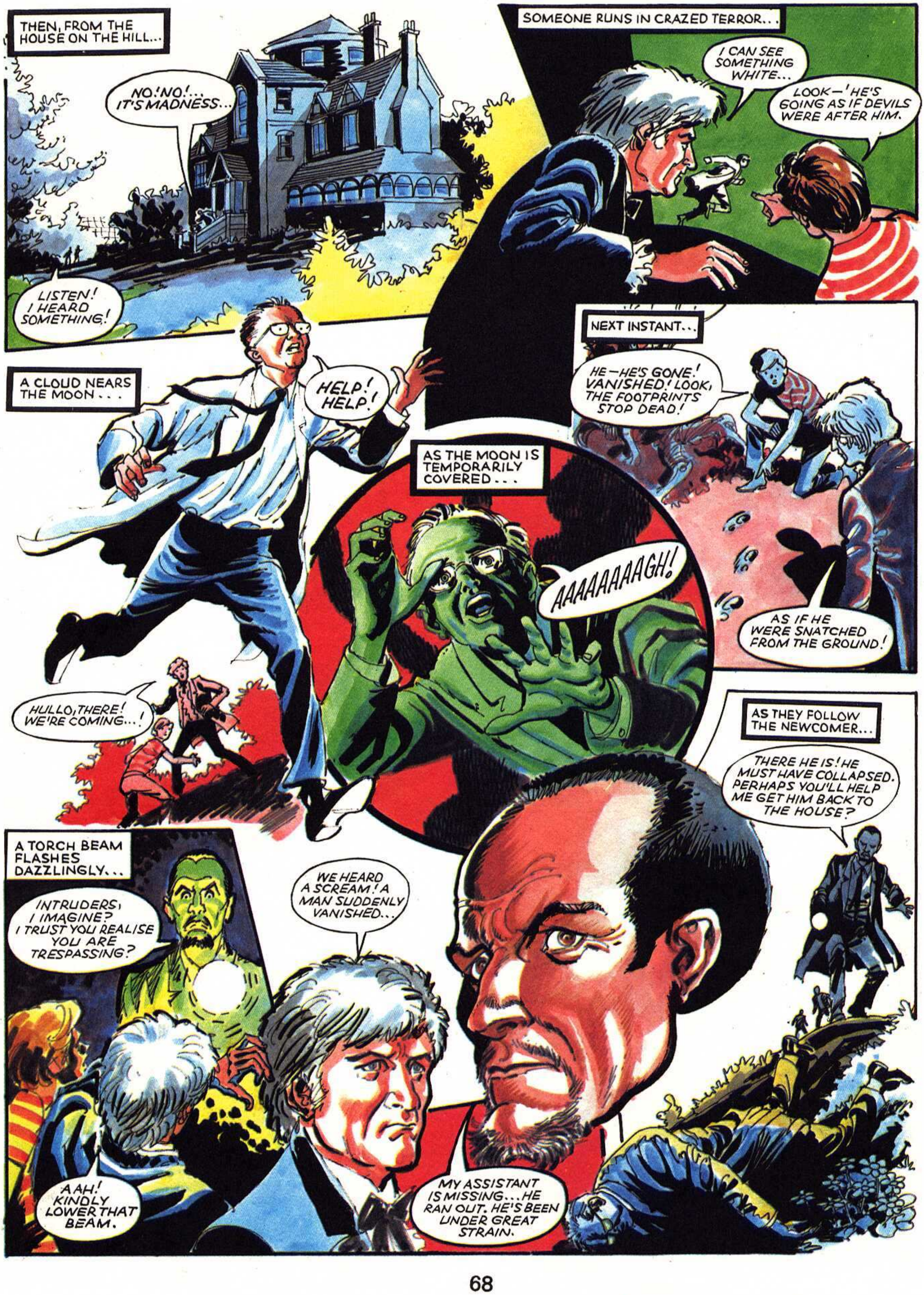
JON PERTWEE

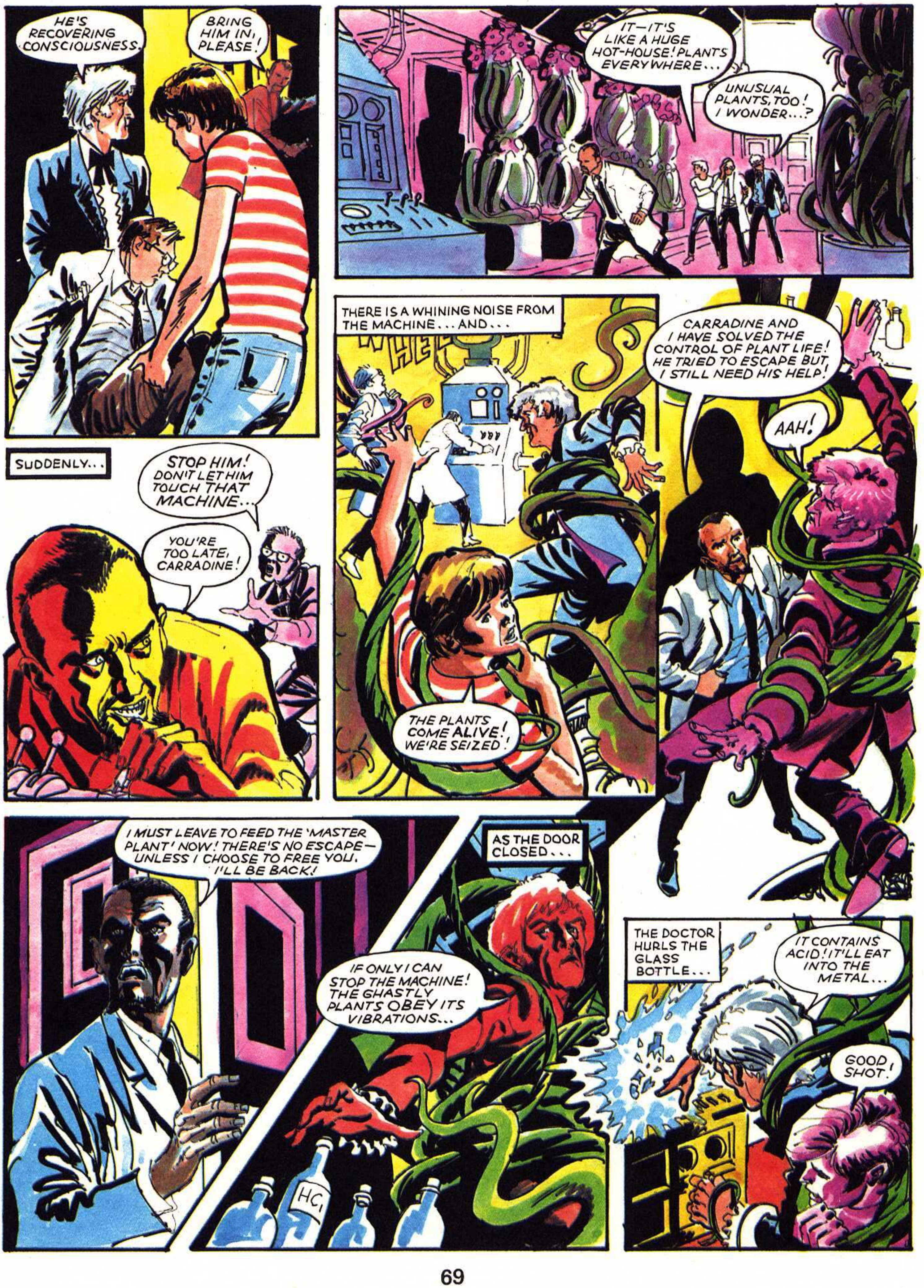
The current Dr. Who. Inherited the part from Patrick Troughton, and is the third Dr. Who since this great series began.

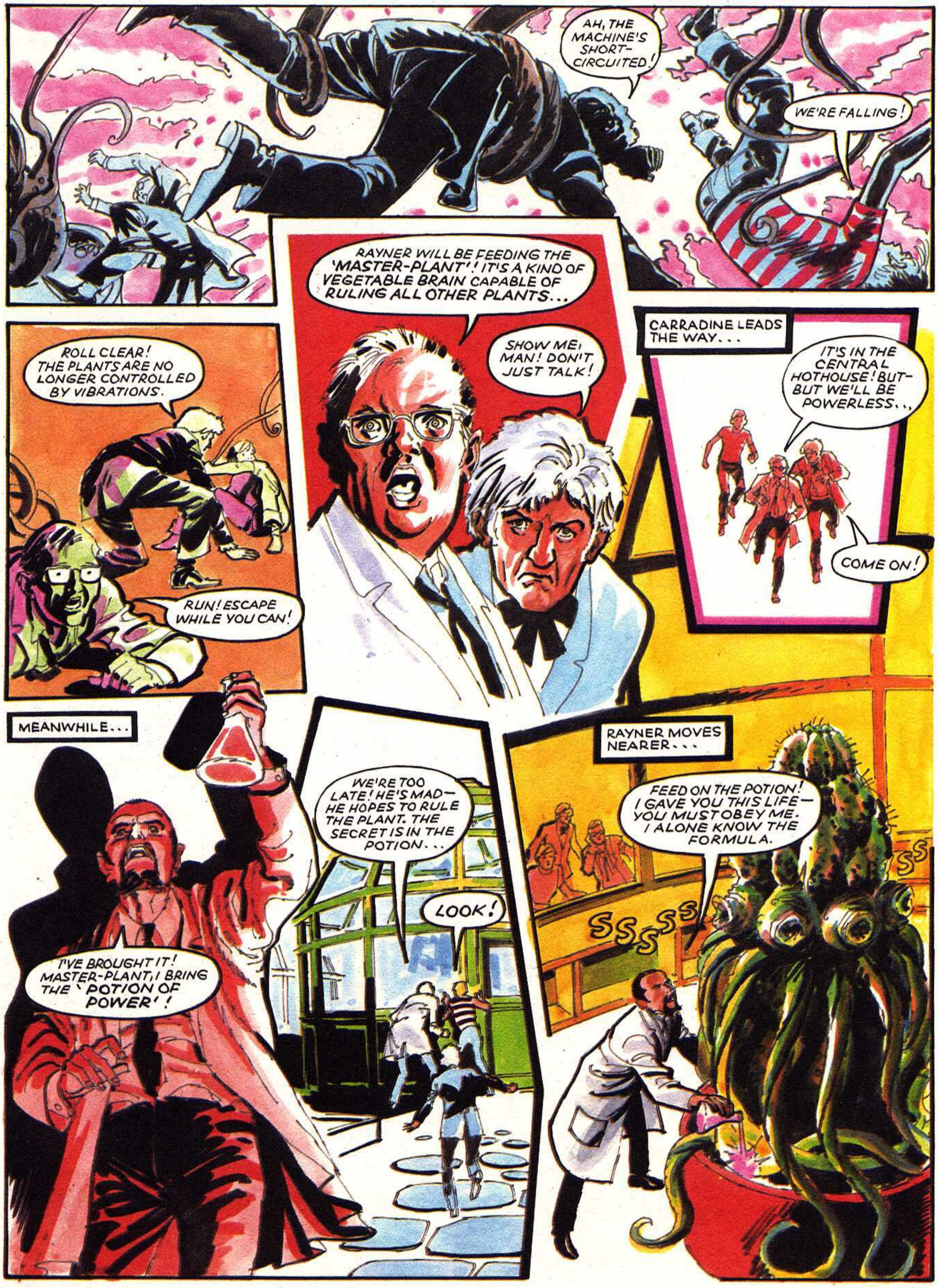
DR. WHO

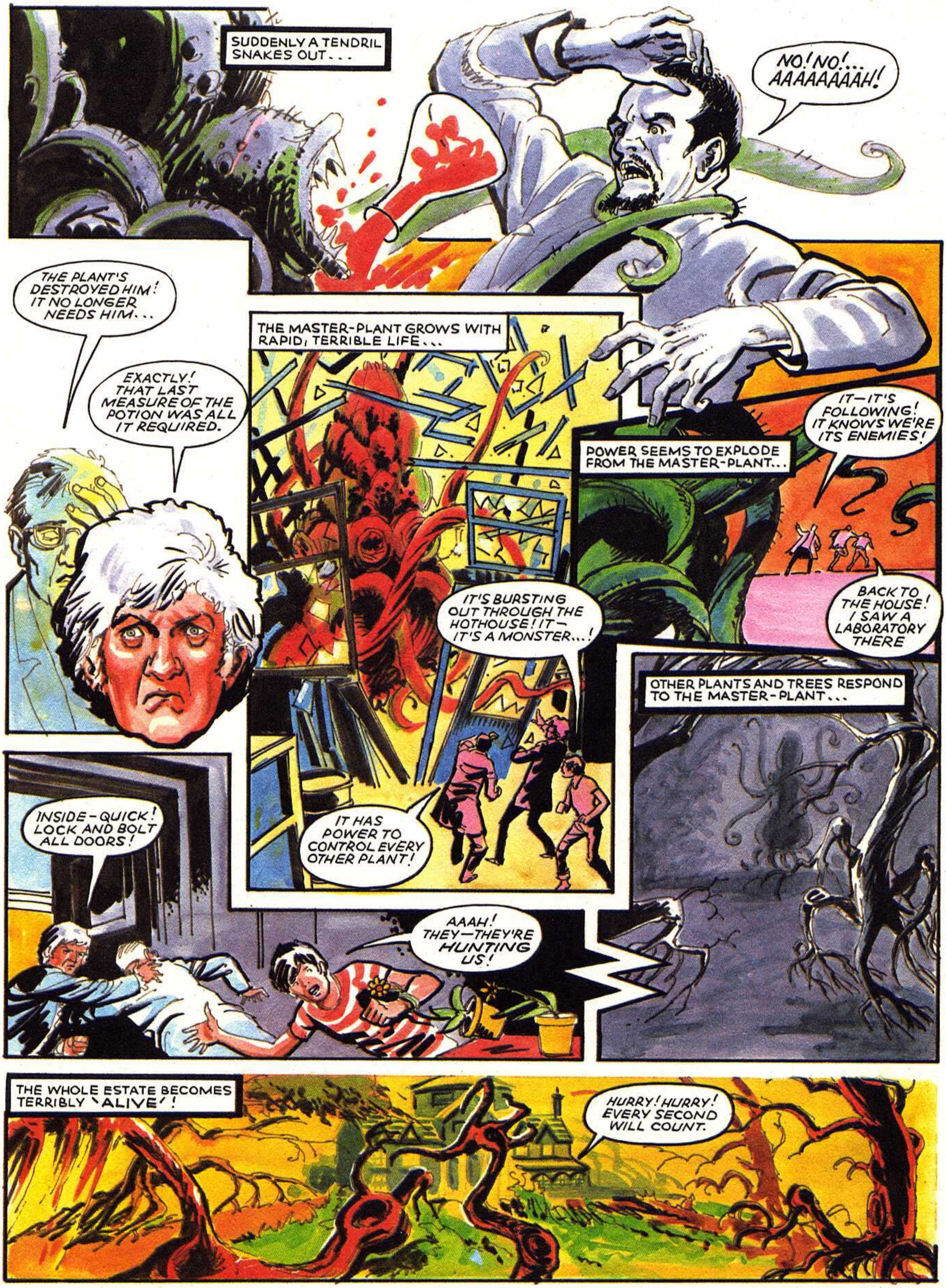

THROUGH THE DARKNESS OF TIME AND SPACE WHIRLS A STRANGE OBJECT... THE TARDIS!
WITHIN IS A SIMILARLY STRANGE BUT THOUGHTFUL FIGURE— DOCTOR WHO.
THE FREQUENCY PULSE CERTAINLY NEEDS ADJUSTING. MOST ANNOYING! THE SELECTOR CIRCUIT IS EQUALLY AT FAULT...
MEANWHILE, ON A MOONLIT WEST COUNTRY ROAD.
THE OLD BUS IS RUNNING A TREAT! FOR ONCE IT COULDN'T BE SMOOTHER.
SUDDENLY...
WHAT THE BLAZES...? GOOD GRIEF—!
DAVE LESTER SWERVES...
HIGHLY UNFORTUNATE! JUST AS WELL THE YOUNG MAN SHOWS CONSIDERABLE SKILL...

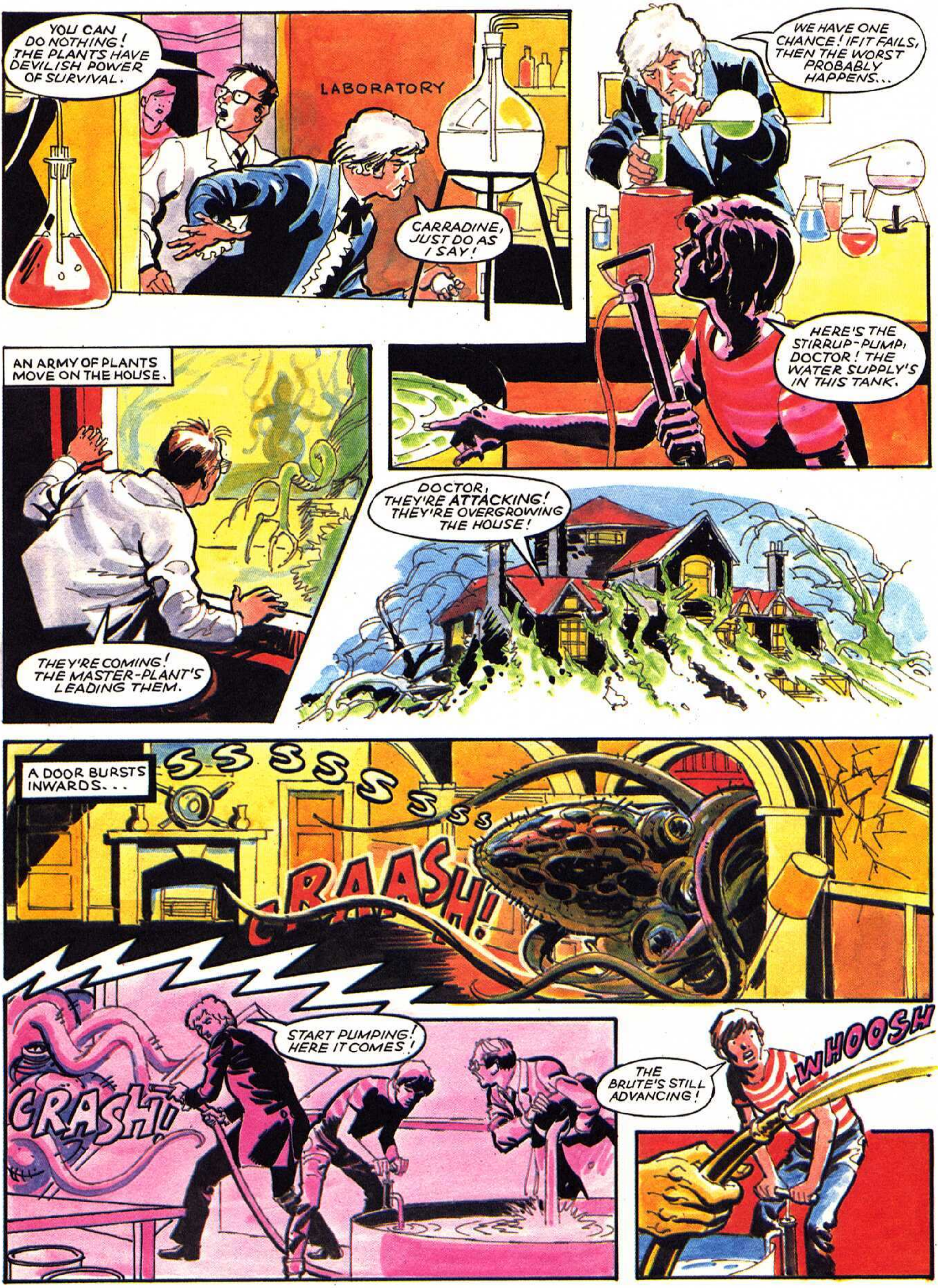

YOU— YOU MANIAC! YOU JUST APPEARED AND... HOW?
A GOOD QUESTION! SO LET'S INTRODUCE OURSELVES FIRST...
THE DOCTOR EXPLAINS AND...
YOU MEAN THAT THIS— THIS THING CAN GO ANYWHERE? IT'S INCREDIBLE... YOU'RE NOT HAVING ME ON?
I SEE YOU REQUIRE PROOF! I'LL PROVIDE IT. NAME THE PLACE...
ALL RIGHT! LAND ME ON THE CARRADINE ESTATE! IT'S A LOCAL MYSTERY... THEY GROW AND SUPPLY TROPICAL PLANTS. BUT I'VE HEARD SOME QUEER TALES...
STEP INTO THE TARDIS, YOUNG MAN!
ENJOY THE DEMONSTRATION! MARK YOU, ACCURATE LANDING IS THE MAIN DIFFICULTY...
PRIVATE PRO
CARRADINE ESTATE
KEEP OUT
NEXT MOMENT...
YOU— YOU'VE DONE IT!
NATURALLY! ...AAH, SO THIS IS THE CARRADINE ESTATE.
A HORTICULTURAL CENTRE! HARDLY A MATTER FOR MYSTERY...
IT'S ALL FENCED OFF. WHY WON'T THEY EVER LET ANYONE IN?

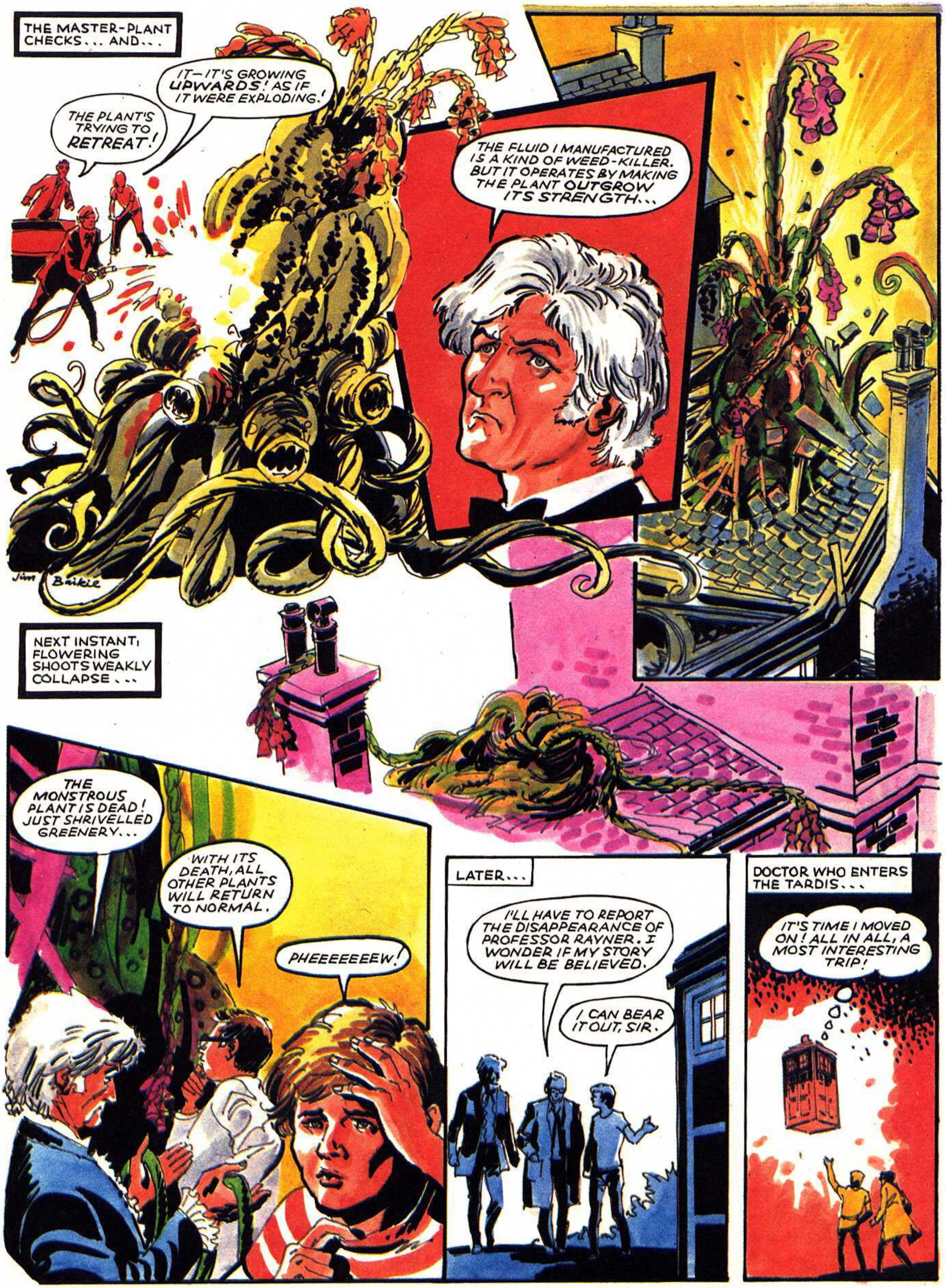

THEN, FROM THE HOUSE ON THE HILL...
NO! NO!... IT'S MADNESS...
LISTEN! I HEARD SOMETHING!
SOMEONE RUNS IN CRAZED TERROR...
I CAN SEE SOMETHING WHITE...
LOOK—HE'S GOING AS IF DEVILS WERE AFTER HIM.
A CLOUD NEARS THE MOON...
HELP! HELP!
HULLO, THERE! WE'RE COMING...!
AS THE MOON IS TEMPORARILY COVERED...
AAAAAAAAGH!
NEXT INSTANT...
HE—HE'S GONE! VANISHED! LOOK! THE FOOTPRINTS STOP DEAD!
AS IF HE WERE SNATCHED FROM THE GROUND!
AS THEY FOLLOW THE NEWCOMER...
THERE HE IS! HE MUST HAVE COLLAPSED. PERHAPS YOU'LL HELP ME GET HIM BACK TO THE HOUSE?
A TORCH BEAM FLASHES DAZZLINGLY...
INTRUDERS, I IMAGINE? I TRUST YOU REALISE YOU ARE TRESPASSING?
AAH! KINDLY LOWER THAT BEAM.
WE HEARD A SCREAM! A MAN SUDDENLY VANISHED...
MY ASSISTANT IS MISSING... HE RAN OUT. HE'S BEEN UNDER GREAT STRAIN.


HE'S RECOVERING CONSCIOUSNESS.
BRING HIM IN, PLEASE!
IT—IT'S LIKE A HUGE HOT-HOUSE! PLANTS EVERYWHERE...
UNUSUAL PLANTS, TOO! I WONDER...?
SUDDENLY...
STOP HIM! DON'T LET HIM TOUCH THAT MACHINE...
YOU'RE TOO LATE, CARRADINE!
THERE IS A WHINING NOISE FROM THE MACHINE... AND...
THE PLANTS COME ALIVE! WE'RE SEIZED!
CARRADINE AND I HAVE SOLVED THE CONTROL OF PLANT LIFE! HE TRIED TO ESCAPE BUT, I STILL NEED HIS HELP!
AAH!
I MUST LEAVE TO FEED THE 'MASTER PLANT' NOW! THERE'S NO ESCAPE— UNLESS I CHOOSE TO FREE YOU. I'LL BE BACK!
AS THE DOOR CLOSED...
IF ONLY I CAN STOP THE MACHINE! THE GHASTLY PLANTS OBEY ITS VIBRATIONS...
HCl
THE DOCTOR HURLS THE GLASS BOTTLE...
IT CONTAINS ACID! IT'LL EAT INTO THE METAL...
GOOD SHOT!

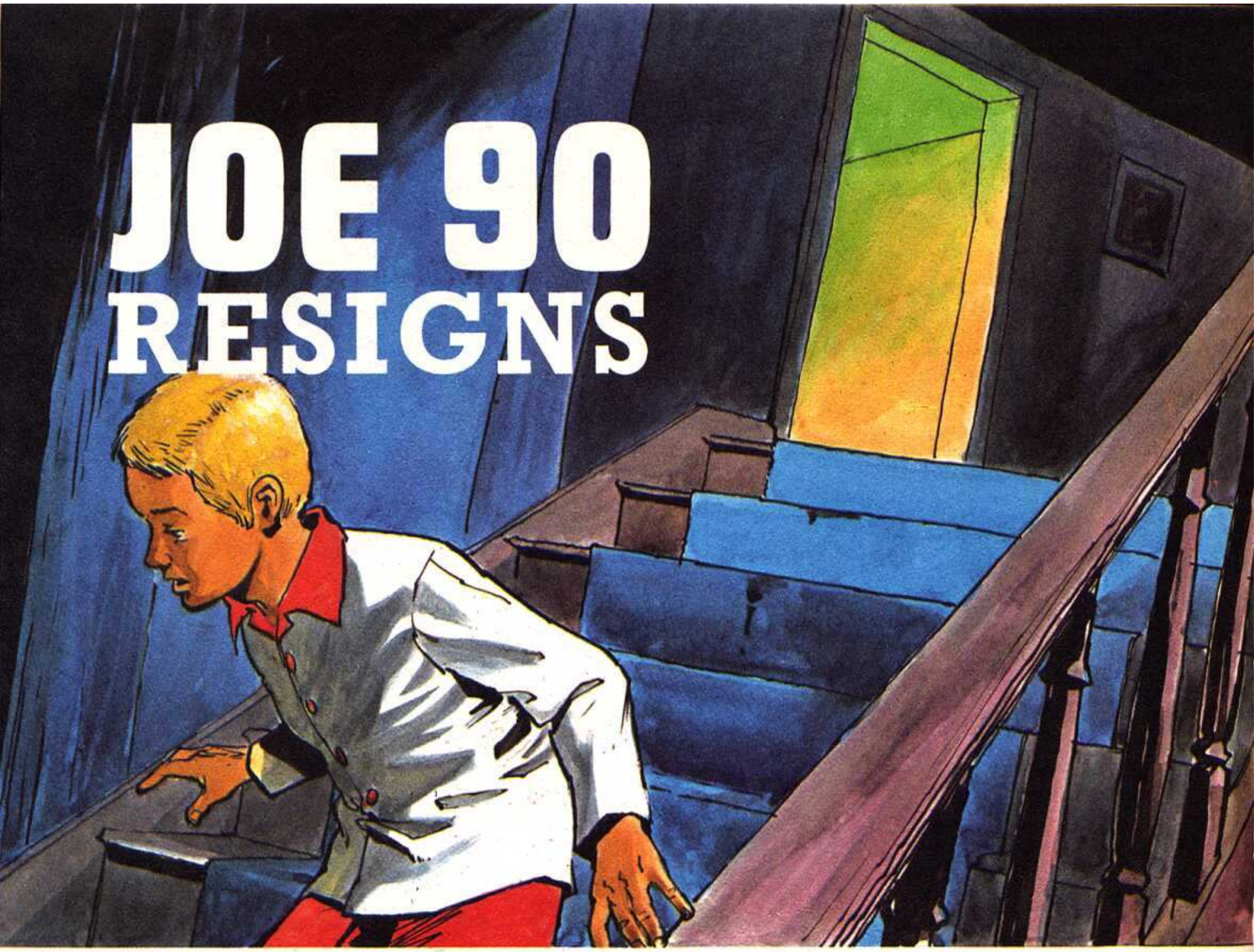

AH, THE MACHINE'S SHORT-CIRCUITED!
WE'RE FALLING!
ROLL CLEAR! THE PLANTS ARE NO LONGER CONTROLLED BY VIBRATIONS.
RUN! ESCAPE WHILE YOU CAN!
RAYNER WILL BE FEEDING THE 'MASTER-PLANT'! IT'S A KIND OF VEGETABLE BRAIN CAPABLE OF RULING ALL OTHER PLANTS...
SHOW ME, MAN! DON'T JUST TALK!
CARRADINE LEADS THE WAY...
IT'S IN THE CENTRAL HOTHOUSE! BUT—BUT WE'LL BE POWERLESS...
COME ON!
MEANWHILE...
I'VE BROUGHT IT! MASTER-PLANT, I BRING THE 'POTION OF POWER'!
WE'RE TOO LATE! HE'S MAD—HE HOPES TO RULE THE PLANT. THE SECRET IS IN THE POTION...
LOOK!
RAYNER MOVES NEARER...
FEED ON THE POTION! I GAVE YOU THIS LIFE—YOU MUST OBEY ME. I ALONE KNOW THE FORMULA.
SSSSS
SS


SUDDENLY A TENDRIL SNAKES OUT...
NO! NO!... AAAAAAAAH!
THE PLANT'S DESTROYED HIM! IT NO LONGER NEEDS HIM...
EXACTLY! THAT LAST MEASURE OF THE POTION WAS ALL IT REQUIRED.
THE MASTER-PLANT GROWS WITH RAPID, TERRIBLE LIFE...
IT'S BURSTING OUT THROUGH THE HOTHOUSE! IT—IT'S A MONSTER...!
IT HAS POWER TO CONTROL EVERY OTHER PLANT!
POWER SEEMS TO EXPLODE FROM THE MASTER-PLANT...
IT—IT'S FOLLOWING! IT KNOWS WE'RE ITS ENEMIES!
BACK TO THE HOUSE! I SAW A LABORATORY THERE
INSIDE-QUICK! LOCK AND BOLT ALL DOORS!
AAAH! THEY—THEY'RE HUNTING US!
OTHER PLANTS AND TREES RESPOND TO THE MASTER-PLANT...
THE WHOLE ESTATE BECOMES TERRIBLY 'ALIVE'!
HURRY! HURRY! EVERY SECOND WILL COUNT.


YOU CAN DO NOTHING! THE PLANTS HAVE DEVILISH POWER OF SURVIVAL.
LABORATORY
CARRADINE, JUST DO AS I SAY!
WE HAVE ONE CHANCE! IF IT FAILS, THEN THE WORST PROBABLY HAPPENS...
HERE'S THE STIRRUP-PUMP, DOCTOR! THE WATER SUPPLY'S IN THIS TANK.
AN ARMY OF PLANTS MOVE ON THE HOUSE.
THEY'RE COMING! THE MASTER-PLANT'S LEADING THEM.
DOCTOR, THEY'RE ATTACKING! THEY'RE OVERGROWING THE HOUSE!
A DOOR BURSTS INWARDS...
SSSSSSSSS
CRAASH!
START PUMPING! HERE IT COMES!
CRASH!
THE BRUTE'S STILL ADVANCING!
WHOOSH


THE MASTER-PLANT CHECKS... AND...
IT-IT'S GROWING UPWARDS! AS IF IT WERE EXPLODING!
THE PLANT'S TRYING TO RETREAT!
THE FLUID I MANUFACTURED IS A KIND OF WEED-KILLER. BUT IT OPERATES BY MAKING THE PLANT OUTGROW ITS STRENGTH...
Jim Baikie
NEXT INSTANT, FLOWERING SHOOTS WEAKLY COLLAPSE...
THE MONSTROUS PLANT IS DEAD! JUST SHRIVELLED GREENERY...
WITH ITS DEATH, ALL OTHER PLANTS WILL RETURN TO NORMAL.
PHEEEEEEEW!
LATER...
I'LL HAVE TO REPORT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF PROFESSOR RAYNER. I WONDER IF MY STORY WILL BE BELIEVED.
I CAN BEAR IT OUT, SIR.
DOCTOR WHO ENTERS THE TARDIS...
IT'S TIME I MOVED ON! ALL IN ALL, A MOST INTERESTING TRIP!

JOE 90 RESIGNS



Joe stared incredulously from his father to Sam.

"Give Sam the badge, Joe ! . . ."

His father half rose and for a moment Joe thought he was going to strike him.

"I can't allow you to be a WIN agent any longer. You don't understand what it's like for me, Joe . . . how could you understand ?"

Joe couldn't sleep that night. At last, in desperation, he slipped out of bed and made for his father's room. He must talk about it. The door to his father's room was open.

For a second Joe's eyes had to adjust themselves to the interior gloom. The bed had been slept in but now it was empty, the bedclothes lay untidily in a corner of the room. There was no sign of his father. From the bed to the door and on to the landing Joe followed the sinister brown stains in the carpet that he knew were blood.

"We've been expecting this for a long time now, Joe. So has your father."

Slowly it sank in. Joe sat watching as Sam telephoned WIN H.Q. His father had been kidnapped ! Then his reverie was broken as the phone slammed down.

"Joe, get in the Rat Trap and wait for me."

"But Sam ! You know what Dad said. . ."

Sam turned on Joe and his eyes held a strange, challenging look Joe hadn't seen before.

"All right, Joe . . . it's your decision . . . you've got about three minutes !"

It didn't take the boy three minutes to realise he had no alternative. Another WIN mission – this time to save his own father ! As Joe sat in Big Rat, the tapes looping their way through the incredible computer, he knew somehow that what he was doing was right.

Joe had been given the brain pattern of Henri Charriere, the world ski champion, and now some six and half hours later, after the helijet drop, Joe found himself, shivering slightly with the intense cold, at the top of a near vertical slope high in the French Alps.

Below him, nestling in the valley, stood a small hut and, if his WIN information was correct, inside was his father. At any minute Joe expected to see the aircraft arrive that would whisk his father behind the Iron Curtain, perhaps forever. The whole area was absolutely crawling with their men.

The opposition were taking no chances. In a few seconds' time Joe would spearhead the WIN rescue bid. It would last only two minutes and thirty seconds. At the end of that time either Mac would be safe and WIN triumphant, or there would be the smell of death in the crisp mountain air.

Joe checked his watch, whispered a few words over his radio, and moved off, his skis hissing over the soft snow. The guard wheeled round.

"Hold it or . . ."

"Please . . . I'm lost . . ." Joe pleaded in German, using his most pathetic voice and at the same time moving towards the edge of the slope.

"Keep away from the edge, son." With the man's warning still ringing in his ears, Joe thrust his ski sticks hard into the snow and was off. Down and down, his speed still increasing, giving an occasional expert flick of his sticks. He knew the man behind would eventually believe his eyes and radio the hut.

Now Joe was three-quarters of the way down the mile long slope, his ankles aching with the tremendous effort needed to control the racing skis.

Under a great cloud of powdered ice which peppered his face, Joe ploughed to a halt just yards away from the hut.

The boy bent and pulled the quick release straps and crunched his way towards the door, beyond which he heard muffled voices shouting excitedly. Joe banged on the door and clicked back the safety catch of his pistol. The large figure that was framed in the open doorway gaped stupidly.

"Drop your gun . . . put your hands up . . . get back inside!" snapped the diminutive figure before him.

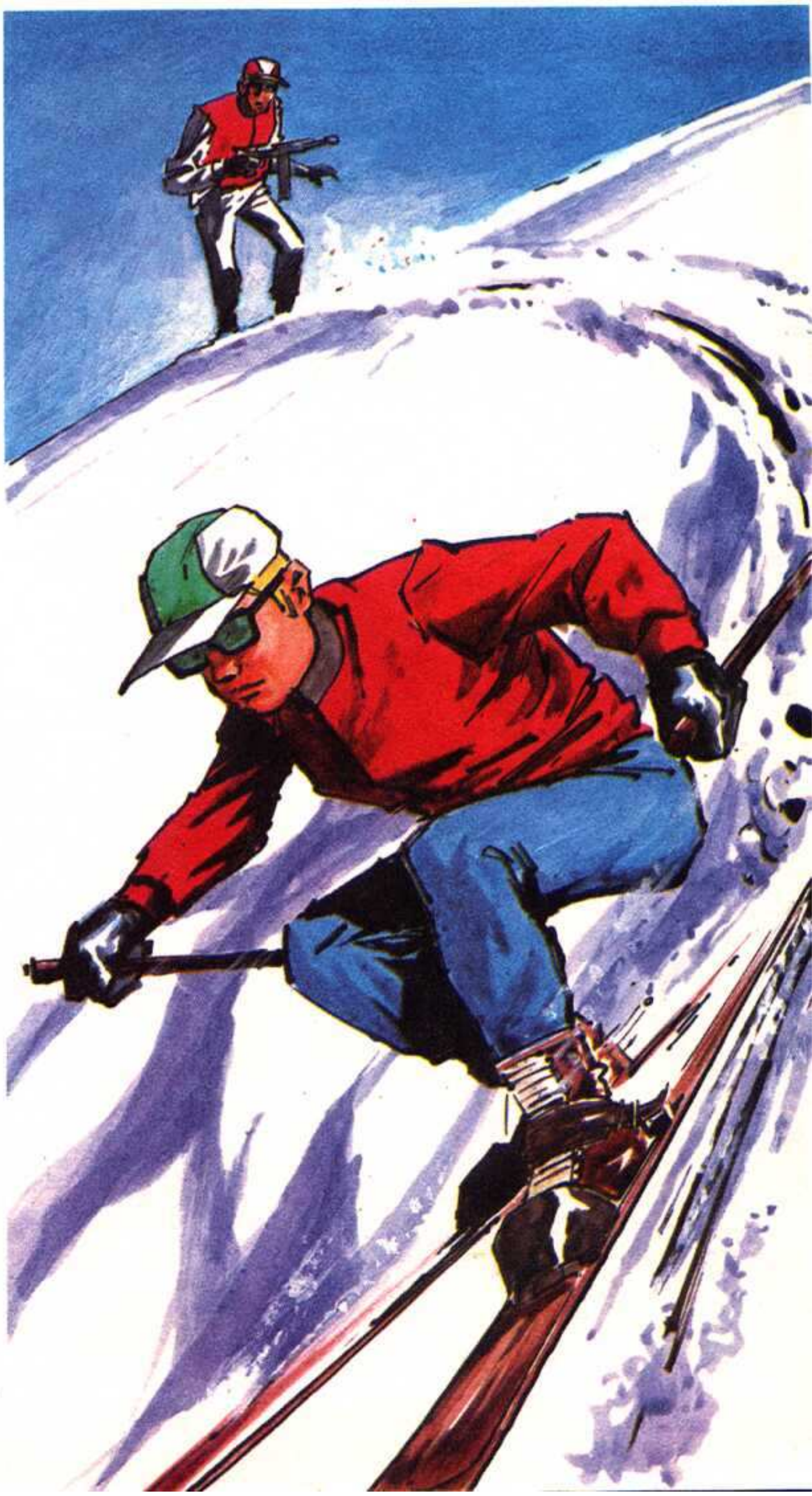
As the guard backed away the noise of helijets came deafeningly close. The whole valley was filled with a dense smoke blanket which billowed from numerous canisters. The second of Mac's two guards was so preoccupied with the din outside that he didn't accept Joe's presence until it was too late.

"Drop your gun or your friend gets it," said Joe coolly.

For a split second the guard seemed uncertain, then the machine gun clattered to the wooden floor.

"Am I pleased to see you, son!" said Mac wearily.

Joe dropped the gas capsule on the hut floor and slammed the door. Father and son crouched close to the tiny building staring anxiously through the swirling smoke for the helijet that was to be their



getaway. Bullets whistled around them and thudded into the snow.

Not far away the rattle of machine gun fire was drowned by the helijet's roar. Abruptly the engines were suddenly silenced. Joe's heart sank. An eternity passed, then the engines coughed into life again and they saw the ghostly shape of the helijet through the smoke.

"Mac . . . Joe . . . come on!"

The friendly sound of Sam's voice rang over the snow.

"Hurry! The tank's leaking . . . hurry!" Sam shouted urgently. Then, under the great whirling down-draught of the rotor blades, strong hands reached out and yanked them aboard.

In a Paris hotel, later that evening, Joe fidgeted uncomfortably.

"Before you say anything, Dad . . . They didn't make me do it. I went against your word, I know . . . but if it means anything, Dad, I think now I can understand how you feel when I go on WIN missions. You see, when you were first missing I thought I might never see you again." Joe fell silent.

Mac didn't say anything for a second or two.

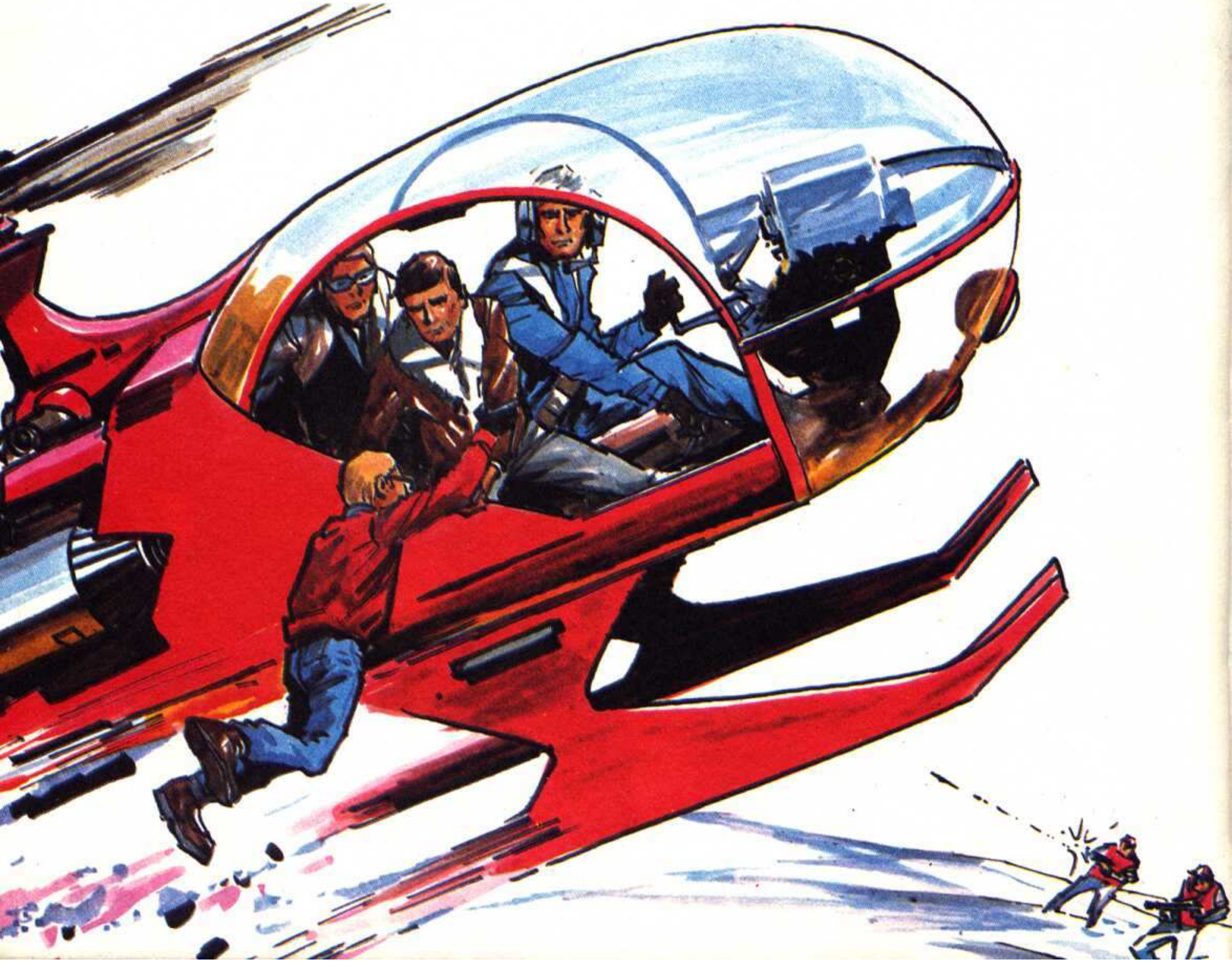
"Out there alone I had time to think as well, Joe. I had in front of me a possible few months' usefulness for my kidnappers, then the end. The chances of escape were nil. I realised then how selfish my attitude had been. If I never came back, I hoped you would have ignored what I said to you yesterday. The Big Rat must be used . . . in the best interests of world peace. And that means Joe 90."

There was a knock on the door and Sam came in.

"Ah . . . right, then . . . er, coming down for dinner?" Joe beamed up at him.

"Well, if it isn't my old friend Sam Loover!" Sam burst out laughing.

"Well, I'll be . . . it's Joe 90, isn't it?"



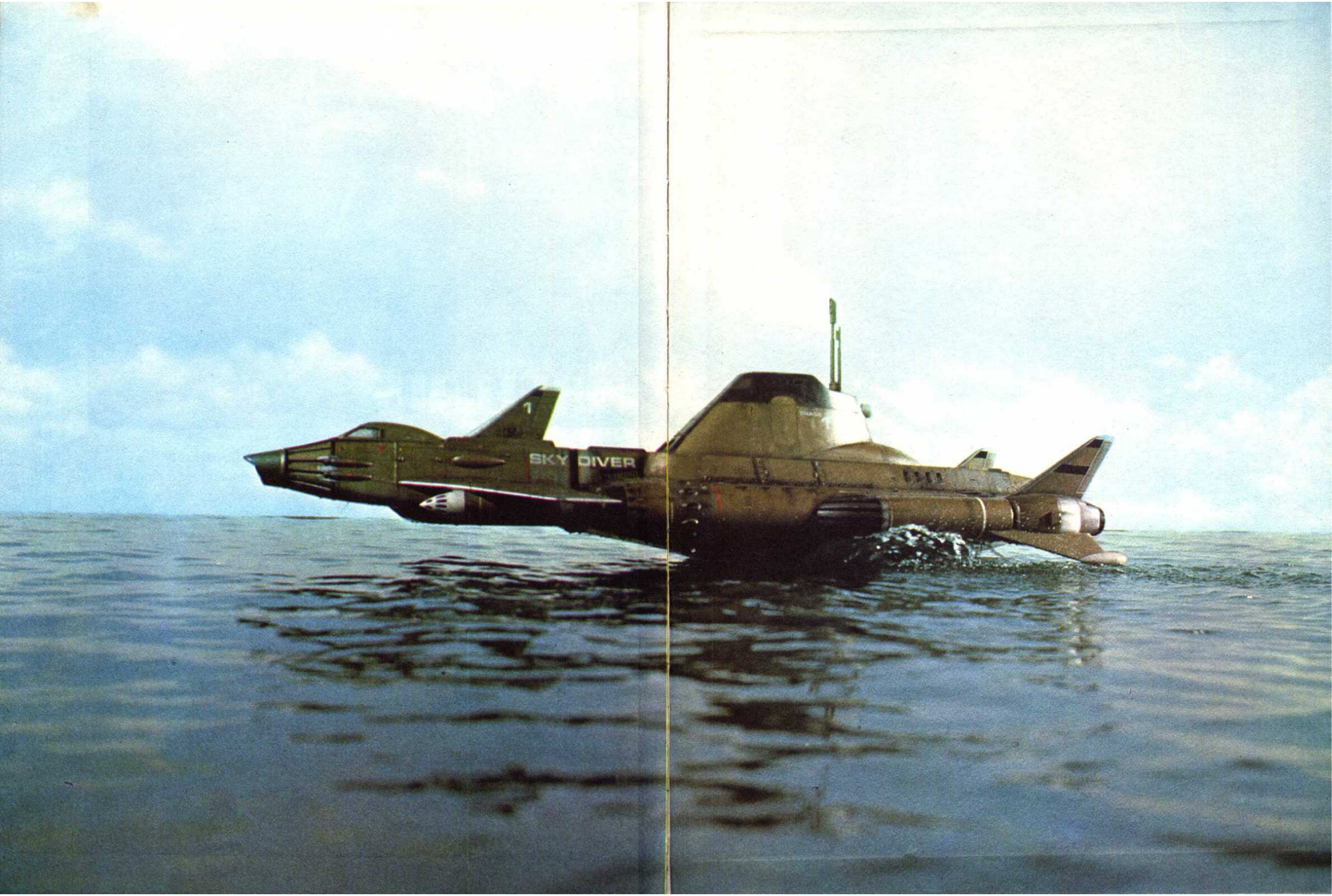
Answers

Countdown quiz, page 19

1. Yuri Gargarin in Vostok 1 on 12th April 1961, and Valentina Tereshkova in Vostok 6 on 16th June 1963.
2. The U.S. submarine 'Nautilus'.
3. Mars (2); Jupiter (12); Saturn (9); Uranus (5) and Neptune (2).
4. (b). Dr. Wernher von Braun.
5. The point of space at which the satellite is farthest from the earth during its orbit is called 'apogee'. When it is nearest the earth, the point is called 'perigee'. Every month the moon, too, comes to its apogee and perigee positions in relation to the earth.

Countdown quiz, page 30

1. (c). The photograph was produced by an instrument called a 'Scanning Electron Microscope', mentioned in 'Think Tank'.
2. Lieutenant Commander Alan B. Shepard and Lieutenant Commander Scott Carpenter.
3. They are areas on the visible face of the moon.
4. Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation.
5. Anders, Armstrong, Aldrin, Borman.
6. Monday (moon); Tuesday (Mars – Tiew, Nordic name for Mars); Wednesday (Mercury – Woden, Nordic name for Mercury); Thursday (Jupiter – Thor, Nordic name for Jupiter); Friday (Venus – Freya, Nordic name for Venus); Saturday (Saturn).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SKY DIVER